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NOTICE.—Communications intended for the Editor may be addressed to Mr. CREDLAND, 185, Great Cheetham Street, Higher Broughton

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Manchester Literary Club.

FOUNDED 1862.

The objects of the MANCHESTER LITERARY CLUB are :—

1. To encourage the pursuit of Literature and Art; to promote research in the several departments of Intellectual work; and to further the interests of Authors and Artists in Lancashire.
2. To publish from time to time works illustrating or elucidating the literature, art, and history of the county.
3. To provide a place of meeting where persons interested in the furtherance of these objects can associate together.

The methods by which these objects are sought to be obtained are :—

1. The holding of weekly meetings, from October to April, for social intercourse, and for the hearing and discussion of papers.
2. The publication of such papers, at length or abridged, in a Magazine, entitled the *Manchester Quarterly*, as well as in an annual volume of Transactions; and of other work undertaken at the instance of the Club, including a projected series of volumes dealing with local literature.
3. The formation of a library consisting of (a) works by members, (b) books by local writers or relating to the locality, and (c) general works of reference.
4. The exhibition, as occasion offers, of pictures by artist members of the Club.

Membership of the Club is limited to authors, journalists, men of letters, painters, sculptors, architects, engravers, musical composers, members of the learned professions, and of English and foreign universities, librarians, and generally persons engaged or specially interested in literary or artistic pursuits.

The meetings are held at the Grand Hotel, Aytoun Street, every Monday evening during the Session. Each Session opens and closes with a *Conversazione*. There are also occasional Musical and Dramatic Evenings, and a Christmas Supper. During the vacation excursions are held, of which due notice is given.

W. R. CREDLAND, *Hon. Secretary.*

185, Great Cheetham Street, Higher Broughton.



Photograph by Lambert, Seattle.

THE EBBING AND FLOWING WELL, GIGGLESWICK.



A WAYSIDE WELL.

By JOHN MORTIMER.

OF late years I have spent some pleasant Autumn days at Settle in Craven, my favourite resting place there being the Ashfield Hotel, once a mansion of the Birkbecks, standing in the main street, and presided over by a host and hostess of a very worthy type; its interior adorned with old pictures and china, with a spacious old garden in the rear with stately trees in it, and made lively by the presence of a flock of fluttering fan-tailed pigeons. Settle is a quaint stone-built grey old town by Ribbleside, with many of its houses clustered in confused irregularity among steeply-ascending ways, with green-pastured limestone hills about it, and a great limestone crag, known as the Castleberg Rock, protruding itself loftily from among trees, in an overhanging and threatening fashion, behind the broad market place, of which it forms a picturesque background. It is open to you to climb to this rock, and from a ledge there look down upon the town, and get a wide landscape view, taking in much of the country that lies between you and Pendle Hill.

The loiterer about Settle, in traversing its crooked and tortuous ways, will come upon grey old houses with grey old gardens, noting a hooded doorway here and there, with many other entrances showing old dates and the initials of

their founders' names carved upon door-post or lintel. A Manchester doctor of one's acquaintance has made a special study of these doorways, reproducing them in pictorial forms, and growing enthusiastic in the pursuit. One or two of the inns have their distinguishing marks of carving, and it comes as a surprise to the stranger to find among their signs, one bearing the unaccustomed name of "The Naked Man." In the market place is a curious pile of buildings, known as "The Shambles," with a row of shops in the basement; above these are slaughter-houses, and, overtopping all, a row of cottages. To this market place, for centuries, the flocks and herds of Craven have been brought for sale, and at the entrance to it from the north there still remains a signboard on a wall to tell the traveller coming that way that he has arrived at Settle. A bridge over the Ribble connects Settle with Giggleswick, and looking up and down the stream, you see the water of it flowing through a rocky channel, with old mills on the banks, and, to the northward, you get sight of Penyghent, looming largely in the distance.

Giggleswick, embosomed in greenery of trees and gardens, and nestling in a steep irregular way at the foot of a great limestone scar, is in some of its old-world features more quaintly attractive than Settle. Through one of its streets a little brook finds a channel, and it has a grand old church, an ancient cross and stocks, and many stone-built, garden-graced, mullion-windowed houses, one of which, of exceptional quaintness, Mrs. Linnæus Banks has used as the central point, and the scene for many stirring incidents in one of her novels. Giggleswick is famous for its school, about which, in its stately buildings, its green-swarded terrace, and its tree-shaded woodland environments, there is a sense of academic repose, contrasting strongly with its modern chapel, perched high

up on a rock above it, a gothic structure with a mosque-like dome, suggestive, as an Irishman said, of "a haythen temple," the interior of which is resplendent with mural colourings and fragrant with the scent of cedar wood.

Extending your researches beyond these limits, you may find much natural beauty around Settle; you may climb to the Attermire Rocks and see the great Victoria Cave there, which I have not seen, being content with the rocks, and not possessing any mole-like taste for such underground explorations. True indeed it is that I have penetrated the recesses of Clapham Cave, but that experience may well last one a lifetime. Pursuing a further pilgrimage, you may cross the fells until you come to Malham Tarn and the Cove there. Waterfalls, too, there are (forces they call them here), such as Scaleber and Stainforth, and much pleasant rambling along the Ribble. From Settle, too, you can find access, by rail or road, past Penyghent and Horton, loved of anglers, to Ribbleshead, and feast your eyes there upon wide and wild tracts of moorland, with Ingleborough and Wharfedale rising from among them, to tempt your feet to stray to higher levels. From Ribbleshead, between these heights, you may descend easily to Chapel-le-Dale, with Wethercote Cave there, and that ancient house of prayer, secluded from the highway, which must inevitably remind you of Southey's "Doctor." No better description of its graveyard, as he saw it, could be given, so one scarcely need make any apology for transcribing it. Moreover, it is in quiet nooks of this kind, with their literary and human references, that the reflective traveller finds some of his most abiding joys. Says Southey:—

"A hermit who might wish his grave to be as quiet as his cell, could imagine no fitter resting place. On three sides there was an irregular low stone wall, rather to mark the

limits of the sacred ground, than to inclose it; on the fourth it was bounded by the brook whose waters passed by a subterraneous channel from Wethercote cave. Two or three alders and rowan trees hung over the brook, and shed their leaves and seeds into the stream. Some bushy hazels grew at intervals along the lines of the wall; and a few ash trees, as the winds had sown them. To the east and west some fields adjoined it, in that state of half cultivation which gives a human character to solitude: to the south, on the other side of the brook, the common with its limestone rocks peering everywhere above ground, extended to the foot of Inglebrough. A craggy hill feathered with birch sheltered it from the north.

The turf was as soft and fine as that of the adjoining hills; it was as seldom broken, so scanty was the population to which it was appropriated; scarcely a thistle or a nettle deformed it, and the few tomb-stones which had been placed there were now themselves half-buried. The sheep came over the wall when they liked, and sometimes took shelter in the porch from the storm. Their voices, and the cry of the kite wheeling above, were the only sounds which were heard there, except when the single bell which hung in the niche over the entrance tinkled for service on the Sabbath-day, or with a slower tongue gave notice that one of the children of the soil was returning to the earth from which he sprung."

Dentdale, Garsdale, and Wensleydale, to all of these one has journeyed from the same starting-place; but it is not of them that I set myself to write. In this limestone country water plays an important part in the make-up of its landscape features. You have it in tarns and ghylls and waterfalls and in streams that suddenly disappear, to break out again in unexpected ways and at remote distances, and if you are a pot-hunter of that kind you may find it playing fantastic tricks in pot-holes, and taste

a fearful joy in looking into the depths of those mysterious and yawning chasms. In contrast with these manifestations of its beauty and power it seems a descent to the commonplace to look upon water in a well, and yet in the one which I have in my mind's eye now there is in its appearance and disappearance a mystery and charm, not in their degree to be exceeded by the rest.

The road from Settle to Clapham takes you past Giggleswick, and under the great mile-long limestone ridge known as Giggleswick Scar. This is clothed in the lower part of it with trees and shrubs which come down to the side of the road; and at a point about a mile and a half from the town you come upon a little bowery recess beneath the leafy covert, and there you find the Ebbing and Flowing Well. The illustration of it—for which I am indebted to Mr. J. W. Lambert, of Settle—shows the well in its present aspect, which differs from the one I have been accustomed to, a number of large boulders having recently been placed about it, giving it, perhaps, more distinction, but detracting somewhat, as it seems to me, from its former simplicity. The water is contained in a stone trough, shown in the front of the picture, and, to quote from the local guide, “in the back wall of the trough, at a height of six inches, there is an oval opening through which the inflowing water comes; in the sides, at the same height, are two small round outlets one and a half inches in diameter; eight inches above are iron gratings.” The well in its ebbing and flowing is intermittent and capricious, and you may go there often to find that it is not working. When it is quiescent there is a certain quantity of water in the trough, and when the inflow begins the water appears to boil in its rising until it flows through the gratings, then the ebb begins and the water subsides to its original level. These movements,

with many variations as to time and extent, influenced, too, as it would seem, by conditions of rainfall, have been going on through the centuries, and though there have been other ebbing and flowing wells in the country, this, we are told, is the only one which has remained consistent in its tidal manifestations. The remarkable feature of this ebbing and flowing of the water is the appearance, at uncertain intervals, of what is known as the silver cord, or otherwise the silver worm. Sometimes, when the water begins to ebb, for a few seconds a silvery streak is formed between the two holes that face each other in the sides of the trough. As a rule the streak is formed by two "worms" emerging simultaneously from either side, and joining in the middle, but sometimes only one worm emerges to traverse the distance across or retreat before it is accomplished; at others there is nothing more than a peeping out and a disappearance, to the disappointment of the watcher. These things I tell you upon the testimony of others, for, though I have often seen the water in its ebb and flow, I have never caught sight of the silver cord.

The mystery of the well and the charm of it exist most largely for the untutored mind. The scientist, who will allow no Naiad in the stream or Dryad in the grove, accounts for the ebb and flow of the water by telling us of a probable syphon in the rock, and disposes of the silver cord as merely a band of air. Says Keats:—

Do not all charms fly
At the mere touch of cold philosophy?
There was an awful rainbow once in heaven:
We know her woof, her texture; she is given
In the dull catalogue of common things.
Philosophy will clip an angel's wings,
Conquer all mysteries by rule and line,
Empty the haunted air, and gnomed mine—
Unweave a rainbow.

It is the same poet, who tells us that "the poetry of earth is never dead," and there still remains a glamour about this well, otherwise why should people on Easter Sunday flock in large numbers to it, or why should they but recently have invested it with a kind of sanctity by making it the subject of a pictorial window in Giggleswick Church? One evidence at least one has had of its fascinating power. Going there one day with a friend, we found a man standing upon a ledge above it gazing intently upon the water. Seeing that we were interested, he began to talk to us regarding its wonders, and in the conversation that followed he told us much about himself. He was a mariner who had sailed over many seas and visited many lands, and among his experiences was that of being taken prisoner by the Russians in their recent war with Japan. Somehow he had found his way to Settle as a visitor, and there he had remained longer than he had intended, becoming almost a resident, the detaining influence being largely the discovery of this well, which had exercised a fascinating power over him, so that day after day he would come here to sit for hours beside it. He told us that he had seen many wonders in his voyagings, but nothing like this. He had written to his captain describing it, and urging him to come and see for himself. That astute seaman, however, had replied that he would have none of it, being persuaded that there must be some fakement about the affair, somebody behind, in fact, working the water. How the water was worked was one of the problems that puzzled our mariner; the syphon theory he was sceptical about, believing that nobody had satisfactorily explained it, but it was the silver cord that puzzled him most, and to see this appear was the special object of his visitation. It did not appear, however, while we were there, and we left him patiently watching for it.

We almost expected to see the seafarer still watching when, in the Autumn of the present year, my companion and I visited the well once more. He was not in evidence, however, but instead we came there upon three vagrom men, road wanderers, dusty, and brown as filberts, but civil in speech withal. The well was ebbing and flowing freely, and they watched the movement of the waters intently. It was for the silver cord they were looking; they called it the snake, for upon its appearance or not depended their luck for the day. Hitherto that luck had been bad enough, but the sight of the snake would change it. Once there appeared at each orifice a faint sign of the coming of the benign influence—a peeping out, as it were, but it vanished quickly, and so they waited on until weary of waiting for that which came not, they turned away to take the road again to Kirkby Lonsdale, one of them remarking sadly to his fellows: “We shall have no luck to-day.” How that would be was not apparent; they had not seen the silver cord, but it might be that the possession of three small silver coins which they carried away with them, though not much of a solatium for their disappointment, might be to them an earnest of possible good luck to come.





THE SALON RAMBOUILLET.

By EDMUND MERCER.

THE Salon Rambouillet was not so much literary in itself as the cause of literature in others. As a body it produced no written work. That dainty anthology of fulsome rhyme, "La Guirlande de Julie," merely a young girl's drawing-room album, containing the superscription of some few of the visitors of more or less literary taste, was hardly a "work," much less literature. Nor did the numberless guests, except some six or so, rank even passably among French writers. Its merit, which was its originality, lay in the provision by its founder of a rendezvous where the aristocracy of society and of intellect might meet on equal terms; the attrition of mind against mind, the contact of courtier with plebeian, reciprocally produced a compound of politeness in manners and letters which was destined to affect the future of French literature to the present day. The good manners of the courtiers became those of the *bourgeois*; while the man of letters was, for his work alone, deemed worthy to kiss the hand of royalty itself. It is to the influence of the Salon Rambouillet that France is directly indebted for the transformation of the fanciful romance into the novel of real life, the foundation of the drama and of the French Academy, the purification and crystallising of the French language and—we add by

way of anti-climax—Molière's "Les Précieuses Ridicules," "L'Ecole des Femmes," "Le Misanthrope," and "Les Femmes Savantes." The "Salon" as an institution had a career in France for two centuries till it disappeared in a *coup d'état* of Napoléon. The pioneer of the Salon though not the most famous or notorious, had the greatest influence, and its destinies are well worthy of consideration.

The entry into his capital by the nine-years Master of France, Henry IV., in 1598, saw not only the close of his uphill struggle against a strong faction of his own subjects, but also—for a century at least—the end of the Religious Civil Wars which for nearly forty years had distracted the kingdom in conjunction with the toxicology and licentiousness of the Valois-Angoulême dynasty. The Edict of Nantes, that marriage bond of the contending Catholics and Huguenots, signed by the King, opened an era of comparative peace, foreign and domestic. The reign of arquebus, toledo and poison-sachet, so vividly detailed in Dumas' trilogy, "La Reine Margot," "La Dame de Monsoreau," and "Les Quarant-Cinqs," was swept with all its bloodshed down the gutter of the past; poverty and riot vanished before cleanliness and national sanity. From the death of François I., "the Father of Literature," brother of Marguerite of Navarre, of "Heptameron" fame, herself the patroness of Clement Marot, and Rabelais, the Valois regime had very poor results to show for all its alleged learning. Ronsard, the poet, affection for whom was a redeeming feature of Charles IX., Balzac, the epistolary, and D'Urfé, the romancer, represented the chief trinity of intellect. During this weary interval of quarrel manners were military, and the language that of Shakespeare's soldier of the same period, "full of strange oaths." There was much opportunity for improvement in both, and Catherine

de Vivonne was the woman who effected the change. Daughter of the Marquis de Pisani, she was unusually well educated. French on the paternal side and Italian on the maternal, the language of both was native to her; she learnt Latin solely in order to read Virgil, and in want of fresh worlds to conquer, acquired Spanish. "Clever in all things," says Tallemant. With a liberal discount, we may credit his assertion. In 1600, on her marriage with Charles D'Angennes, Marquis de Rambouillet, she left her father's house, the Hôtel de Pisani, for that of her husband, the Hôtel de Rambouillet. This family mansion he sold in 1606 to a gentleman, who, in his turn, a few years later disposed of it to Richelieu for demolition. The Cardinal built on its site the Palais Cardinal, now the Palais Royale. Rambouillet—we have the story from Tallemant, essentially the chronicler of the family—procured plans for a second Hôtel, which, à la Maréchal d'Ancre, that is to say, after the fashion of Noah's Ark, dissatisfied the Marquise, who incontinently designed a mansion to suit herself. She insisted on the staircases being placed at one end, "in order to have a great suite of rooms; raised the ceilings; made the doors and windows high and wide, and face to face one with another. When the Queen-Mother wanted to build the Luxembourg she ordered her architects to inspect the Hôtel de Rambouillet, and the visit was not entirely useless to them. She was the first to paint rooms in colours other than red and tan, and this gave the name to her Blue Chamber." Possibly this was designed with a view to the receptions already taking picture in her thoughts. At all events, when the Hôtel was finished in 1608 she left the Court of Henri Vert-Galant and retired to her own little realm.

At the outset the idea of the Marquise was political and moral. Virtuous herself, it was with contempt she saw

and heard the irregularities and selfish political bickerings of the courtiers; to combat which she determined to make her Hôtel a centre of moderated opposition, wherein these barbarisms of language and manners should be counteracted by intelligence, courtesy and purity—the last, it must be noted only as a fact, in the comparative degree. Attended by numerous friends, intellectual no less than aristocratic, her mansion was not slow in becoming the meeting-place of the most noteworthy personages, the clearing-house of wit and wisdom, wealth and worth. The honour of admission was eagerly coveted, for such admission was a dual brevet of culture and virtue. A gathering such as this, “a very palace of honour,” as Bayle styled it, could not fail to exercise unusual influence at such a time, favoured as it was by external circumstances. Henri, notwithstanding his wit, and his Minister, Sully, despite his *Mémoires*, occupied in settling his kingdom and therein exercising the most rigid economy in matters financial, had little opportunity for cultivating belles-lettres. Later, the morose and feeble savagery of Louis XIII., and the literary indifference of all his Ministers prior to the advent of Richelieu, left to the Hôtel de Rambouillet the patronage and guidance of letters, a dictatorship which unfortunately modified its advantages with serious inconveniences. This salon of clever folk, the Parliament of Literature for the first half of the seventeenth century, “the arbiter of taste, sanctuary of morals, and academy of language,” after having for long enjoyed an uncontested glory, saw the decline of its authority in the reign of Louis XIV., and the eighteenth century had for it nothing but disdain and sarcasm, owing in great measure to the unintentional effect of “*Les Précieuses Ridicules*” of Molière. As the infatuation of its contemporaries and the calumny of their immediate

posterity are hardly unbiassed, it is well, in order to appreciate with some degree of justice, the services and sins of this celebrated gathering, to place ourselves outside the pale of either, though in touch with both.

From its inception the Salon Rambouillet was crowded and busy; its long roll-call disclosing all the most distinguished names in France—the Prince de Condé and Cardinal Richelieu, as well as Voiture, Chapelain, Balzac and Corneille. The first of its kind on this side the Alps, enclosing rank and genius in one circle, its essence was talk. Authors were invited, not for their work, but for their sense. One met here three or four Arnaulds, abbés, judges, officers without stint; two princes of the blood attended for pure love of it, with the Duc d'Enghien and his sister, afterwards the Duchesse de Longueville. Later appeared St. Evremond, Madame de La Fayette, the young and laughing Sevigné. Old Malherbe sang the Marquise de Rambouillet; to her Corneille presented Balzac. Voiture was practically the master of ceremonies, whilst the chief jester was the Bishop Godeau. Racine here made his first bow to society; Mademoiselle de Scudéry was the oracle equally turgid and irresistible, and Tallemant the special reporter. We can imagine that the semi-Italian hostess might truly style her assembly a "conversazione." Speech was the great business. The letter writers of the day, Voiture and the rest, gave us a wonderful insight into the style of converse, a little heavy with endeavours to lighten it—like pastry—by rolling it out and giving it a twist. There was no lack of subject. The everlasting nature of things worldly, the news of the day were all there for analysis, whether of sentiment, sources, opinions: those preferred which had a daily use in social life, such as friendship, duty, honour, love—the greatest of these being love. There were scat-

tered debates on the sense and beauty of words, the latest book, a dissertation of Balzac, "Le Polyeucte" of Corneille, a comedy of Ariosto, or the merits of rival sonnets. In spite of the excellence of its intention, the circle of the Marquise de Rambouillet did not escape the law dominating literary coteries. Reunions of this kind, as Guizot has well observed, make for themselves a separate set of ideas and a special language; those who use these being the initiated and those outside the pale, profane. Through the indifference of the Court and the ignorance of the people, outside criticism of this circle failed to repress its whims and vagaries, and in its turn it began to exist on itself, on the productions of its members who alone criticised them. In consequence little things became important, and trifles serious. Each evening must furnish aliment for the activity of wit, and such gew-gaws as love letters, rondeaux, sonnets, madrigals, enigmas, riddles were in the heyday of success. One became enraptured over a word, another with a quatrain, a third by writing two sonnets created a schism in society. Voiture and Benserade held the literary world in suspense between "Job" and "Uranie"; Malleville's sonnet "La Belle Martineuse" disputed supremacy with a like one of Voiture's. Balzac and Voiture argued gravely whether *muscardin* or *muscadin* should be preferred; they fought a witty battle over the conjunction *car*; the rivalry of two authors of *bon-mots*, Ménage and Montmaur, bemobbed all Parnassus, and originated an endless warfare. Words were tortured in the most fantastic manner and versification was burdened with new shackles. The restrictions of the sonnet did not suffice; rondeaux were governed by new rules; acrostics and *bout-rimes* were tortured out of sense by the tyranny of strange rhymes. Under such governance what might have been poetry became lyricism—a

dry lyrism more intellectual than imaginative, sense and feeling being sacrificed to sound and fury signifying nothing. In this direction the influence of the Hôtel de Rambouillet was bad. The mind of the great public for whom literature is, or should be, intended, is formed of units of greater or less intelligence. Whether the work be meant for the lower or higher understanding (by lower understanding we do not wish to infer that a book should be written down to pander in story or subject to baser feelings; but written down to the comprehension only, *e.g.* a child may understand a Bible story but not the exegesis thereof), clarity of thought is the first necessity of the author, and clearness of expression the second. Clarity and clearness are defined by the public as what its intelligence grasps. The high assay of the value of that intelligence is demonstrated without need of further insistence, in the simple note that all the classic masterpieces in every language possess these two essential virtues and the public appreciates them. The great mistake of the ladies and gentlemen of the Salon Rambouillet was that they were so circumscribed within that "Blue Chamber" and so bound up in conventions of their own creating, that they did not desire or were unable to understand many things which were most worthy of their understanding, and thus the greatest and most vital matters in literary work were excluded or permitted to slip. In this way French literature has doubtless lost much of its breadth and solidity,—and it shows how strong was the influence of the Salon for good or ill that this is so. Consequently many of the French masterpieces in and since the seventeenth century, compared with the masterpieces of other literatures, appear bereft of something essential, as though virility and reality had yielded place to a superficial frivolity and trifling with the matter in

hand. French literature indeed took on a brilliant simplicity it had never before possessed and has never lost; a simplicity well-tryed and very easy, which imitated the natural but was its antithesis. It was difficult not to be brilliant. This brilliancy was, however, a defect, since it was also difficult to speak to a public in a manner to which it had not—and has not yet—been educated; thus was literature materially restrained again. The man of the day, the man of society, submitting to social conventions and accidents, having a trivial matter of business with God, a lot with men, nothing with nature, was the necessary original of all portraits. Being actioned by nothing but love—love, be it noted, as understood by the Rambouillet circle—he made love the pivot of all books which pretended to represent him. The great world outside this coterie could not, fortunately, comprehend this folly. It is interesting to track down the reason. The women of the Salon regulated and dominated the conversation, introduced sentiment, decided how to speak of love with decorum, or not to speak of it at all. Men were present, and by some accident it might be possible, even in that most chaste assembly, to overstep the limits of prudery. Therefore the ladies decided upon a byeway. They separated the sentiment from its material and physical qualities, took chivalric gallantry for object and point of departure, purified it, subtilised it, extracted its quintessence, and then overdrew upon imagination to depict it delicately, and falsely; and, as though this falsity were not sufficient, they transported this sentimental sublimity into heroes of Italy, Persia, Greece and Rome, who, however, remained essentially French. It is hardly possible that these well-intentioned ladies could have found a better title than that of *Précieuse*,* diploma of honour,

* This word is impossible to give in English. The nearest approach to it is perhaps the word "precious" as used in the ultra-sentimental fashion of the Pseudo-Æsthetic movement a generation ago.

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THE SALON RAMBOUILLET

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intellect and purity. The chief articles of their code were to banish falsehood and deceit; to honour that wise constraint, the principle and guarantee of politeness; to be faithful to friendship, and to give mind the preference to the senses. The material was thus their enemy; unable to suppress it, they endeavoured to subject and humiliate it. This spite for the sensible drove them in one direction to prudery, in another to celibacy, giving them an aversion from matrimony which they delayed to the utmost. It was in virtue of this matrimonial poetic that M. Montausier courted Julie d'Angennes for fourteen years—although betrothed—before she consented to marriage. Side by side with these “*précieuses*” manners, the language spoken and written was “*précieuse*.” The *Précieuses* had a conventional tongue which none but the qualified could translate. To style aught by its proper name was profanity. Paris was no longer Paris, it became Athens; Notre Dame was Delos; France, Greece; and so forth. Men were re-baptized. Louis XIV. was Alexander; Richelieu, Seneca; Chapelain, Chrysanthus; and the hostess, Arthenice, an anagram on her name Catherine invented simultaneously by Malherbe and Racan. Even common and necessary words were replaced by metaphors and paraphrases. A mirror became “an adviser of the graces”; sofas, “commodities for converse”; nightcaps, “innocent accomplices of falsehood.” How could the everyday world outside understand either these manners or foreign tongues, or the literature representing both? These are the peculiarities which Molière attacked. He said, in his preface to his comedy, that the Hôtel de Rambouillet was outside his criticism, that the most excellent things are liable to be copied by poor apes who merit blanket-tossing, that the real *précieuses* are wrong to be angry when one makes fun of the *ridicules* who

imitated them so atrociously. Although we must believe him, we may still think that the cap is too well-fitting to be intended for another head. It is not, however, these absurd burlesques of the original précieuses that we are considering. The true précieuses were the Marquise herself, Madame de Sablé, the Duchesse de Longueville, Madame de Maure; whose world was the school whereat were formed the Bussys, the Rochefoucaulds, the Sevignés, the La Fayettees, the Maintenons, the most exquisite examples of French society in the second half of the century. We may forgive them the sins of affectation and false taste, which, after all, occasioned very little more harm than euphuism, for the sake of the real benefit that accrued from their meetings. It was the pure love of intellectual attainments in both the Marquise and her daughter and the sympathy and friendship they felt for those who displayed them, as well as their moral worth that render them memorable. Tallemant was quite right in his assertion that "the Hôtel de Rambouillet was the rendezvous of all that was most gallant at Court and most polished among the intellects of the day;" and it is perhaps better criticism to lay the origin of Molière's first famous comedy at the doors of the imitators of the fashion.

The idea of such an assembly was a novelty. It was an unique thing to meet frequently the same men and women in temporary equality and complete freedom, not for ceremony or the titillation of the physical senses by dancing, supper, show, but for the sole simple pleasure that could be extracted from the reunion of minds mutually excited by contact, each forcing the other to produce its best. Social life in this respect, escaping frivolous formalism, had a profoundly intellectual tone. The salons became in time the marts of ideas, where

exchanges never languished and the proper function of men and women, and the hub of the entire fabric was conversation. Nor were these assemblies mere academies. Men of action and of the dusty ways of commerce, though not dominating the Salon Rambouillet, gave it a touch of actuality. In a word, Chapelain described it as "the great world purified," "the touchstone of wisdom." On enquiry by Balzac, anxious to know this new power, he wrote: "There is no other assembly exhibiting so much good sense and less pedantry." We of to-day are not prepared to admit the correctness of his last phrase. The gentle Chapelain, himself pedantic, did not recognise pedantry when he saw it. Candle-light is so much less searching than sunshine. Even when all the sconces were a-twinkle and innumerable lustres a-swing with the slightest breath, were flashing prismatic sparks without the half-expected crackle, the immensity of the great "Blue Room" of Arthenice in its rich decorations of dark velvet absorbed the light, to the prejudice of short-sight. Asmodeus on some such occasion would have shown us near the door the Marquise de Rambouillet and her daughter, Julie d'Angennes, not so much formally awaiting any particular personage, as to be in evidence at every entry. The subalterns, supers and minor crowd—who have a habit of coming first to such functions, really to miss nothing, providentially to provide an animated background to greet the more important arrivals—are already in deep discourse. The Marquis, less of a host than the stirring-spoon of the converse, with M. de Montausier, due, some few years after demand, to be son-in-law, are moving here and there greeting the Abbés Belesbat Du Buisson and Puré, for the nonce men of the world, Chaudebonne, Tallemant des Réaux, versifiers, critics, officers, courtiers, gossips, chatterboxes—more

visible than famous. Now enters a gentleman, doffing his old hat, exposing his venerable perruque, opening his threadbare cloak, and so displaying a black taffeta waistcoat, made at the cost of his sister's underskirt. He is too well greeted by his hostesses for onlookers to venture to scoff. Besides, he is M. Chapelain, a man of universal learning, with a taste for politics, history and philosophy, in the confidence of Colbert, "expert" in matters literary; the originator of the "Dictionary" of the Academy; the inventor in France of the "unities" in both tragedy and comedy; the converter of Richelieu to literature; his mind better adapted to the mechanics than the æsthetics of letters. Educated for the exact purpose of becoming a poet, by means of quotations from his forthcoming epic he was taken at his own valuation for twenty years. When "*La Pucelle*" appeared in print it was hopelessly damned; no one knew whether it was serious or burlesque. Yet he introduced Racine to the literary world, and assisted at the education of Madame de Sevigné. The arrival of Voiture brings into the assembly an expectation of gaiety, though he enters with a mysterious air and a clouded face as though weary in mind. Interrogated on his trouble, "Ladies," says he, "I have just heard some bad news about the moon"—which reassures everyone. His reputation is such that, like Gilbert's jester, he is expected to be funny, if desired. Cotin, who follows on Voiture's heels, takes advantage of this good humour to ask a riddle; and his audience, too polite to venture upon the answer, leaves the propounding to Julie. She then takes her accustomed chair, and the guests, anticipating the little ceremony, surround her. Producing her album, "*La Guirlande*," she asks: "Which of you to-day brings his homage? Is M. de Voiture at last resigned to pay his tribute?" Voiture, in lieu of

reply, falls into reverie, for, slightly jealous of M. de Montausier, he has sworn to do nothing towards "the gallantry of his happy rival." There steps into the silence Desmaretz de Saint Sorlin, whose epic "Clovis" is, if anything, worse than Chapelain's "La Pucelle." "Madame," says he, "I have penned a quatrain on the violet. I hope it will not appear unworthy to rank beside the stanzas of M de Réaux on the fleur-de-lis or of M. Chapelain on the Crown imperial:—

In my colour modest, lowly in my nest,
From ambition free in underwoods I hide;
But should some happy chance lay me upon your breast,
The shyest of all flowers will hold the place of pride.

Applause follows this madrigal, discussion ensues, and Ménage adds his blessing. While this is in progress, in a window embrasure are to be seen the Marquis de Rambouillet, in conference with M. de Montausier, Bishop Godeau, Sarrazin, and the ubiquitous Tallemant. Their heads are close together and they have the air of conspirators. There is no cause for alarm; a ripple of quiet laughter betrays the fact that this is La Cercle Scandaleuse, and they are telling stories in keeping with the colour of the room. Soon a slow, loud and solemn voice sounds through the chamber. The figure which speaks is tall and masculine-looking, with ugly cast-iron features, black hair and sallow complexion. Madame Cornuel whispers to Tallemant that "the hand of Providence is clearly visible in the production of this being, since he made her sweat ink as she daubed so much paper." The virile oracle is Mademoiselle de Scudéry, highest authority amongst the casuists of the Salon. She moots a thesis of amorous psychology: "Let us examine who is the most unhappy; a jealous lover, a lover disdained, a lover sepa-

rated from his mistress, or a lover who has lost the object of his passion." The discussion is general, and long and profound; so profound and so long that the evening wears on to its close, and the decision is reserved for to-morrow.

The example set by this Society was soon imitated everywhere. First by the fashion of Paris, then by the Louvre and the Palais Cardinal. At the Marais and in the Place Royale, the palaces of princes and nobles, the houses of rich tradesmen even opened their doors. Here Clermont d'Entragues; there the Marquise de Sablé, who has "the most delicate expression in her letters and in her converse," then Madame de Maure, Madame de Choisy, Madame Scarron, and M. de Testu, chief of police, at whose house were mostly read works destined for the stage. At Mademoiselle de Scudéry's, every Saturday, were to be seen a few people of the world and many of letters. This was the gynecocratic academy which turned out the real *précieuses ridicules*; here were exhibited all the failings of the Rambouillet circle in an aggravated form, and few of its virtues. Under its gaunt and gigantic hostess, authoress of the most Alexandrine of romances, it became a college of pedantry. The more skilled intelligences were absentees, and famous names were few. The Viscomtesse d'Auchy might read a paraphrase of St. Paul; her friend Madame de Mornay once attempted a novel, and Madame de Saintor, an old actress of the Foire, became blue-stocking and scribbler. An elderly officer, it is averred, clumsy with the pen, was obliged to tickle paper in order to be admitted. Chaplain was once inveigled within its doors, and wrote to a friend, he had on that occasion diverted himself quite sufficiently with "these fairies who had more years than sense."

The influence of the Hotel de Rambouillet was not so

obvious as indirect. It followed the ideas and continued the work of Malherbe on the French language in giving it strength and nobility, and the multifarious debates on words led to Chapelain, after the inception of the French Academy, suggesting the official dictionary. Among the euphuisms that its paraphraseology produced were many expressions beautiful in themselves, but trite by overmuch quotation, as "to wear the mask of virtue," "to clothe one's thoughts in noble expressions," "to be sober in speech." These might almost serve as rules of the Salon. Its conversation was ever polite and urbane, and was yet brimming with *savoir-vivre*. Its expulsion of coarse and vulgar language made chaste, in words at least, the authors it admitted; and restrained those it had not yet enrolled. Its influence on the drama was on similar lines; abolishing the obscenities which dishonoured it. The reception accorded to D'Urfé's "*Astrée*" contributed much to this revolution and encouraged Madame de La Fayette in her novel writing.

The French Academy was the direct descendant of this Salon. In 1626 Chapelain, Gombaud and Malleville, with five other frequenters of the Hôtel de Rambouillet, met at the house of Valentine Conrart and agreed to meet weekly for literary purposes after the manner of their favourite circle. For three years these meetings continued, and Richelieu, himself a guest of Arthénice, offered the nine his protection and an official existence. They hesitated, but finding no sufficient reason for refusal, acceptance was agreed upon. The first members were the original nine, which number was increased to twenty-seven, then thirty-four, and finally forty, at which the membership still remains.

The evidence of contemporaries on the status and influence of the Hôtel de Rambouillet is voluminous in

bulk; the consideration it enjoyed extending throughout the length of the seventeenth century. Flechier, in his funeral oration on M. de Montausier, multiplies epithets on this salon, "where were assembled so many personages of quality and worth composing this select court, numerous without confusion, modest without constraint, learned without parade, polite without affectation." Another contemporary, dilating upon the historic importance of this illustrious society, alludes to it as "the meeting place of all that were most distinguished in condition and merit, a tribunal to be reckoned with, whose decision has great weight in the world, on the conduct and reputation of the personages at Court and in Society."

The inheritance of the Hôtel de Rambouillet devolved on the Duchesses of Montausier and Orléans, and was continued by Madame de Maintenon, the last wife of Louis XIV., and guardian of that intellectual and polished conversation, which was maintained in the eighteenth century at the little court of the Duchesse du Maine and later in the circles of Mesdames Tencin and Geoffrin. This art of conversation was lost during the Revolution, but revived momentarily by Madame de Staël, till finally interrupted by the declaration of Napoleon as Emperor.

The Salon was a happy thought of Mme. de Rambouillet, and France has benefitted by it. Its faults were patent, and being largely imitated, worked a considerable baneful influence on the technique of French literature. That this influence was not permanent is due perhaps to the saner minds of the Salon itself, the Salon finding its own cure for its own disease. Voiture was a great offender; but the Salon encouraged Racine, Corneille, Boileau, Bossuet, Flechier, de La Fayette, Sevigné, whose wider outlook permitted of more fresh thought than the introspection of Voiture. Faults are so much more easily aped than

virtues and the would-be fashionables were merely apes, and as such Molière treated them. It is more their misfortune than their fault that "Les Précieuses Ridicules" has smirched the high reputation of the real *précieuses* whose only desire was the improvement of social and literary life, and who gave their nights to the soirées of the Hôtel de Rambouillet.





DIVINATION BY BOOKS.

By WILLIAM E. A. AXON.

BOOKS are used for many purposes, including some for which they were never intended. A common impulse has made races wide apart use those Scriptures which they regard as sacred or of special importance, as machinery by which to detect the secrets of the future or to unveil the hidden mysteries of fortune. The Bible has not escaped this treatment. The Moslem uses the Koran, and the Hindu the Veda and the "Ramayana" for the same purpose, if not in precisely the same way, as the Roman employed Virgil's verses. Homer, Hafiz, Ovid and other authors have also been pressed into the service of prophecy.

The *Sortes Virgilianae* were among the simplest form of bookish divination. The "*Æneid*" was opened at random, and a pin stuck into it, also at random. The passage thus indicated was twisted into an omen, good or bad, as to the business for which the book had been consulted. A still more primitive fashion was to take the first line on which the eye chanced to rest. The extraction of a sense appropriate to the occasion must often have been a matter of difficulty, sometimes demanding much ingenuity. It would be easier when a number of verses, no doubt selected as specially useful for such a purpose, were copied out on separate slips and shaken up together in a bag before one was withdrawn for the enlightenment

of the anxious enquirer. Some striking instances have been recorded of the virgilean lots selected by famous men. Thus Severus is said to have hit upon the verse "*Tu reges imperio populus, Romane, memento*" (vi. 852):—

But Roman, thou, do thou control
The nations far and wide.

The brief empire of Gordianus is suggested by his choice of "*Ostendunt terris hunc tantum fata, nec ultra esse sinunt*" (vi. 870):—

That youth the Fates but just display
To earth, nor let him longer stay.

The occasional use of the *Sortes Virgilianae* survived far into the Christian ages. Charles I.—who must be regarded as a good Churchman, even though a poor statesman—is said to have tried his fate with a copy of Virgil in the Bodleian, and happened on the ominous verses in the "*Æneid*," iv. 615—620.

The gallant Falkland on the same occasion drew "*Æneid*," xi. 152—181. Conington has thus translated this opening of the lament of Evander over the dead body of his son:—

O, Pallas! parting from your sire
Far other pledge you gave
To moderate your martial fire
Nor war's worst fury brave!
I knew the young blood's maddening play,
The charm of battle's first essay.
O valour blighted in the flower!
O first dread drops of war's full shower!

This is Wellwood's account, who makes the persons Charles I. and Lord Falkland, and the place Sir Thomas Bodley's great library at Oxford. Aubrey has another

version of the story. According to his account, when the fate of Charles I. was in the balance Cowley, the poet, was with the future Charles II. in Paris, and both were greatly depressed. The Prince suggested cards as a means of diverting their thoughts, but Cowley, who did not play, made a counter proposal of *Sortes Virgilianae*. He always had a Virgil in his pocket, and the Prince, by means of a pin, selected the passage in the "*Æneid*," iv. 615—620. Not understanding Latin well, the Prince asked for a translation. Cowley's version ran :—

By a bold people's stubborn arms oppressed,
Forced to forsake the land he once possessed,
Torn from his dearest sons, let him in vain
Seek help and see his friends unjustly slain.
Let him to base unequal terms submit
In hopes to save his crown, yet lose both it
And life at once, untimely let him die
And on an open stage unburied lie.

The last verse reminds one of the baseless tradition that the coffin of the King was filled with rubbish, and that his body was put into the sand near Whitehall. The falsity of this was shown when his tomb was opened at Windsor in 1813.

The same verse in the Koran, which forbids wine, condemns also the casting of lots. "O ye that believe!" cries the Prophet, "verily wine, and the casting of lots, and images, and divining arrows, are an abomination from amongst the works of Satan. Shun them therefore that ye may prosper. Verily Satan asketh that he may cast amongst you enmity and hatred through wine and games of chance, and hinder you from the remembrance of God, and from prayer. Will ye not, then, refrain therefrom?" (Sura, v.). Yet the Koran, which condemns divination by

lot, is made an instrument by which a *fal* or lot is determined. When a man would become acquainted with his future by Koran divination he must first perform his ablutions, and then read the first chapter of the Koran—the Fatiha or introduction—which is commonly used by the Moslems as a prayer on initiating anything of importance. After this comes a special prayer: “O God, in Thee I must surely trust, and I divine by Thy Book; cause me to see what is concealed in Thy hidden secret, in Thy unknown will, O Lord.” Then the sacred book is reverently opened at a venture, and on the right-hand page eight lines are counted, and then the last letter of this line is taken. Suppose this letter should be *Alif* (A). On turning to the table of omens we read:—

If *Alif* should be to thee, O friend, a lot,
In pleasure becomes to thee the circumstance of every day.

There are similar obscure couplets for each letter of the alphabet. Thus, for the third letter *Ta* the words are:—

By repentance turn back from every sin;
Be of charitable countenance that thou mayest drive away
adversity.

The seventh *Kha* is decidedly encouraging:—

Thy prosperity will be with grandeur and blandishments;
The hand will be prosperous in every design.

By the twenty-ninth and last letter *Ia* we are admonished:

Be joyful, relying on what is secret;
Be forbidden in that which is prohibited.

These rules for divination by the Koran Dr. Adam Clarke found written at the end of a magnificent copy of the Mahometan Scriptures in his library. The prayer was in

Arabic, but the fortune-telling verses were in Persian, beautifully written and exquisitely illuminated. From this it seems clear that this was no illiterate superstition, but a method of attempting to pry into futurity adopted by the wealthy and the learned. Sometimes, as Edward William Lane has pointed out, the seventh line on a right-hand page opened at random is made to supply an answer. An even simpler plan is to count the number of times the letters *Khá* and *sheen* occurs on the page. *Khá* represents *Kheyr*, meaning "good"; and *sheen* represents *shaer*, which, being interpreted, is "evil." A good or bad omen is deduced from the letter having the majority.

In one remarkable instance of Moslem divination by a book the Koran was not the instrument selected. The poet Hafiz had the reputation of being a heretic, and the orthodox ministers of Shiraz were not inclined to say the customary prayers over his dead body. Finally, the matter was referred to the adjudication of the lot. Verses from his odes were written on separate slips and placed in a vase. When one was taken out it bore the words: "Fear not to approach the corpse of Hafiz, for although sunk deep in sin, he will rise to heaven." Thus toleration gained a victory by chance.

The "Ramayana" has been used in India for the same purpose as the Koran in Moslem lands. One person holds the book whilst another passes a string between any two leaves. The passage thus hit upon is read, and a meaning, good or bad, extracted from it. There are also books of omens with numbers attached. A cube with marks on it is cast three times, and the numbers thus obtained are added together, and the answer is found in the corresponding number in the book of omens. With some of these divination books a more elaborate method is used. Nine cowry shells are taken as representative of the nine planets

and are thrown nine times. If the flat side turns up it counts as one; if the convex, as naught. The figures are added together and divided by nine. The remainder only is used as the divining number. Thus, if the remainder is 1, the answer will be found in the first line on the first page. Similar methods may be found in the so-called "Napoleon's Book of Fate"* and other popular fortune-telling literature in Europe. Thus the British Museum has an Italian "Libro de' Sorti" of the seventeenth century, in which the answer to be received was decided by the cast of three dice.

Divination by the Bible was formerly not uncommon, and may not be even now entirely obsolete. One method was to push a key at hazard between the leaves of the

* "Napoleon's Book of Fate" was printed in London in 1822, that is soon after the death of the ex-Emperor. It was dedicated to his widow, Marie Louise, by the translator, who claimed that his version was made with her permission and by her commands. The earliest copy I have examined has a greatly promising title-page:—

"The Book of Fate," formerly in the possession of Napoleon, late Emperor of France, and now first rendered into English, from a German translation of an ancient Egyptian manuscript found in the year 1801 by M. Sonnini, in one of the royal tombs near Mount Lybicus, in Upper Egypt. By Henry Kirchenhoffer, Fellow of the University of Pavia, &c., &c., &c. The eleventh edition. Printed for C. S. Arnold, 21 Tavistock Street, Covent Garden, and sold by Morrison and Watt, Fenchurch Street, and C. Stocking, 3 Paternoster Row. 1826. 8vo.

The translator declares that the German MS. was lost by Napoleon at the battle of Leipzig in 1813, and that the Prussian who found it sold it to a French prisoner of war, whose intention of returning it to Napoleon was frustrated by death. The representatives of the officer conveyed it to Marie Louise, "who unfortunately never had an opportunity, although she eagerly sought for it, of sending it to her husband." It is an amazing fabrication, for symbolical figures in the coloured frontispiece have not the slightest resemblance to Egyptian hieroglyphics, nor was there in 1801, when Sonnini is said to have found the MS. any one who could translate an Egyptian MS. The glamour of Napoleon's name no doubt added to the popularity of this oracle, and it passed through many editions. The title is still maintained, but the books—there are three, priced respectively one shilling, sixpence and one penny—differ much from Kirchenhoffer but all maintain, in a more or less attenuated form, the oraculum which constitutes it a book for divination. It has been said that the "Dodechedron" of Jean de Meun (1556) is the prototype of this kind of book. The "Nouveaux Oracles" de Vulson de la Colombière may also be named.

closed Bible and to take the verse touched by it as an omen or direction. A pin was sometimes used instead of a key. The late Mr. T. T. Wilkinson, of Burnley, had a Bible which had often been used with a key by Lancashire damsels who were inquisitive as to their future marriage, and it bore evidence of their anxious inquiries. First, the Bible was opened at Ruth, i. 16—17:—"And Ruth said: Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: where thou diest will I die, and there will I be buried. The Lord do so to me and more also if ought but death part thee and me." Next the verses were covered by the wards of the key, and then the Bible was tied with a piece of cord and the book suspended by joining the ends of the little fingers under the handle of the key. The verses were repeated by the girl with great solemnity, followed by the name of one of her admirers; if the books retained its position other names were mentioned until the book turned round and fell through the fingers. The person who has been named as this occurred was regarded as the destined husband of the curious damsel. In Derbyshire a different formula is employed. This is a passage from Canticles: "Many waters cannot quench love, neither can floods drown it; if a man would give all the substance of his house for love it would utterly be contemned." The rest of the incantation is like that already described.*

This in the nineteenth century. In the eleventh century we are told that at Caen, Gundulf and some other monks sought to know their future from haphazard

* Sonnini describes a similar divination practised by the girls of the Grecian Archipelago, in which a jar of water was balanced on the thumbs of two girls, and its turning to right or left indicated the future husband. This was only available on St. John's day.

passages in a gospel. The words which Gundulf hit upon was interpreted by Lanfranc, who was then Abbot, to mean that the monk would become a bishop. This was, of course, before Gundulf attained to the see of Rochester, an event which happened in 1077. The appointment was in the hands of Lanfranc, who from Abbot of Caen had become Archbishop of Canterbury, and thus had it in his power to secure the fulfilment of his own prophecy.

The early Christian Church used the lot in various ways, and had both the *Sortes Sanctorum* and the *Sortes Apostolorum*. The last-named was a collection of pious sentences, and its use for divination was preceded by a three days' fast. In the first-named methods omens were obtained from the passage hit upon by chance in the psalter gospel, lectionary, or sacramentary. It is of this that Saint Augustine, writing to Januarius in the year 400, said that whilst an abuse of the oracles of God, it was yet preferable to having recourse to demons for the same purpose of unveiling futurity. In the Armenian life of St. Eugenia we are told that she disguised herself as a man and became a monk. When the head of the monastery died she was selected by the brethren as his successor. She had scruples as to accepting the post, but at last consented to be guided by the *Sortes Evangelicae*. The gospel was brought, and the passage which first caught her attention was:—"Jesus said to his disciples: Ye know that the rulers of the heathens are lords, and the great ones oppress them. But let it not be so in your midst also; but he that shall among you desire to become first let him be least of you and servant of all." Then Eugenia accepted the headship, saying: "Make up your minds upon this model that I shall be so." A curious point about this story is that the verses represent a text of the gospels differing from that now received. In the

later Latin recension of the story of St. Eugenia the quotation is accommodated to Matt., xx. 25, and Luke, xxv. 25. It would have needed a miracle for the disguised woman saint to have seen both these passages at once.

The reference to the Bible for guidance by special texts taken at random long continued, and probably still continues. When Charles I. was hesitating whether he would abandon Strafford to his evil fate the Lord Chamberlain, by *Sortes Biblicae*, produced the verses: "And he set judges in the land, throughout all the fenced cities of Judah, city by city, and said to the judges, 'Take heed what ye do, for ye judge not for man, but for the Lord, who is with you in the judgment.'" Hence it was argued that the responsibility lay not with the King, but with the judges, although Charles had pledged himself that Strafford should not suffer in life or honour! But a King who wants to abandon an unfortunate friend can always find excuses and apologists. A remarkable instance of seeking for guidance from a verse indicated by chance is given in the life of the Evangelical leader, the Rev. Charles Simeon, who declared himself "no friend to such superstitions as the *Sortes Virgilianae*." Once, in a season of depression, he prayed that on opening the Scriptures he might find some text to sustain him. He then chanced upon the verse: "And as they came out they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name; him they compelled to bear his cross" (Matt., xxvii. 32).

Bibliomancy was common amongst Hebrews. Passages transcribed from the Bible were used as talismans. Psalms xci. was known as the "Song against Demons," and verses chosen at random by children were taken as omens. Some of the rabbis accepted as a special revelation to themselves words they heard recited by the pupils in the school. When a person was dangerously ill a copy

of the Pentateuch was opened, and the first name that met the reader's eye was added to the name of the sick person in order to avert the evil destiny. The words found at the beginning of the page of the Bible opened at random were regarded as oracular, and the same applied to the passage on which the thumb rested on opening the book.

When St. Augustine was still teaching rhetoric he was a great believer in some forms of divination. The kindly physician Vindicianus sought to wean him from the books of the horoscope-casters and similar superstitions. When Augustine asked him to account for the many true things that had been foretold he said "That the force of chance diffused throughout the whole order of nature brought this about. For if a man by accident opens the leaves of some poet, who sang and intended something far different, a verse oftentimes fell out wondrously apposite to the present business, it were not to be wondered at if out of the soul of man, by some higher instinct, not knowing what goes on within itself, an answer should be given by chance, not art, which should coincide with the business and actions of the questioner."

This suggested explanation did not satisfy Augustine, who, however, did not find one more to his liking. A famous statesman once referred to the "dismal business of explanation." Those who are not willing to accept the doctrine of coincidence as an explanation of the success—when it does succeed—of bibliomancy may find it difficult to offer one that will better meet the necessities of the case.





A FRENCH IDYLL.

By S. BRADBURY.

IN old Oissel, beside the brimming Seine,
Through the long sultry August afternoon,
Within a green vine-trellised arbour cool,
We sat—old Télémaque Bellevergue our host,
Philippe and François, neighbour-friends of his,
With James, my fellow-wanderer, and myself
(The idyll-singer of an empty night)—
And pledged an *entente cordiale* of our own.

And something said, by whom I know not now—
A chance remark—made Télémaque relate
The tale of Jules Toupet—the patriot Jules—
Of how he served his country in her need,
And how his country served him in return :
Which, here retold, without the fluent tongue,
The *patois*, and the gestures of our host,
With voluble comments from his friends, may seem,
Beside the annals of our own V.C.'s,
A trivial thing enough—more fit to pass,
A scrap of unrecorded history,
Across the idly-shuffled dominoes
In village cafés, when the lamps are lit,
Than to be set in stately English verse,
Like English idylls of the classic sort ?

For many a day the troops of General Blague
And those commanded by his wily foe
Had chased each other round and round a hill,
Until it chanced, upon a certain morn,
After the usual tranquil bivouac,
That one or other of the generals led
His force, in error, east instead of west,
And so the foes at last came face to face.
And all day long the noise of battle rolled
About the hills and hollows of the hills,
Until, as fell the twilight, brave old Blague
Was forced to admit that he had lost the day—
Whilst poor Toupet, alas! had lost an arm.
And when the morrow came Jules went in hope
Until he reached the tent of gallant Blague
(Where still the general at breakfast sat),
And, pointing to an empty, hanging sleeve,
Made modest application for discharge.
Whereat the general grew wroth and called
Poor Jules "poltroon" and other nasty names,
Demanding (as he cracked another egg
In a fine patriotic frenzy) "How,
With still a right arm left to shoulder arms,
Could he, a soldier, turn a coward's back
Upon his country's foes!" till from his lips
Relentless died the angered sounds away
As Jules saluted and in silence went.
So once again these bold and bitter foes
Pursued each other round and round the hill,
Manœuvring and manœuvring till they met
By some misunderstanding as before.
And all day long the noise of battle rolled
About the hills and hollows of the hills,
And victory hung in balance till the dusk,
Then turned again in favour of the foe,
And our brave Jules, leading the last attack,
Left on the gory field his other arm.

And when the morrow came Jules went in hope,
Sought out the general brooding in his tent
And, pointing to a pair of empty sleeves,
Made timid application for discharge,
But found the general still inflexible.
"You may not carry arms," cried he, "but still
Can march with your brave comrades in the ranks
And stop a bullet that would else lay low
A better man, if not more brave"—and so
Poor Jules saluted and in silence went.

Again and yet again did grim old Blague
Lead (from behind) his men against the foe;
Again and yet again, at close of day,
He led (in front) his men in full retreat,
And Jules (had ever soldier harsher luck!)
Lost first the one and then the other leg.

And when the morrow came Jules went in hope
(Etc. and etc., as before),
And either time he made, for his discharge,
A pleading application. All in vain!—
"*Cr-r-r-r-rè nom de nom!* and art thou here again?
Shirking the march!" "But how, *mon général?*" "How?"
Cried the exasperated chief, "why that
Is your affair, not mine. Go—get a crutch—
A wooden leg—get anything—get out!"
So Jules saluted and in silence went.

And for the fifth time the heroic Blague
Joined issue with his foe, flushed with success.
And all day long the noise of battle rolled
About the hills and hollows of the kills;
And victory at the setting of the sun
Remained with Blague and his brave men at last,
But ere the truce was called a cannon-ball
Took off the head of poor unlucky Jules!

And when the morrow came Jules went in hope
And sought once more (as had become his wont
To follow each encounter with the foe)
The tent of General Blague, and, pointing out—
What scarce was needed—the defective state
Of certain parts of his anatomy,
Made anxious application for discharge.
But grim old Blague, in gracious mood at last
Through his belated victory, a full,
Nay, generous meed of praise bestowed on Jules,
And even from his dignity unbent
So far to offer him a cigarette—
One of his own beloved and special brand.
“Like a brave soldier hast thou served!” he cried,
“Thy country, and thy country now must show
How she rewards her true and valiant sons!
Our glorious victory of yesterday
Will cause whatever I may ask to be
Granted, I know, before I make request,
And as thou wilt not wish, my honest Jules,
To live at ease and rust in idleness,
Some little sinecure in which the pay
Is regular and decent and the work
Is only nominal shall soon be found,
For choice an easy—*Tiens!* the very thing!—
My wife, who daily sends me all the news,
The doings and gossip of our little town
Beside the Seine, wrote me but yesterday
That our old postman, Père Lemoine, is dead.
How lucky! Better lucky born than rich—
Thou know’st the proverb, Jules! And for a man
With both arms lost and legs as well (he checked
The items on his fingers) *and* his head,
What happier occupation could be found!
They want a postman in Oissel, and you
Are just the very man to take the post.

You lucky dog ! to fall upon your feet
So soon," and added, as he saw that Jules
Was troubled how to express his gratitude,
" No thanks ! no thanks ! *mon Jules* ; the place is yours."
So Jules saluted and in silence went.

We did not see the *facteur* as he passed
Upon his round that sultry afternoon,
Or would have called him in to drink our healths
As we would fain drink his ; nor did we care
To ask too curiously of aught would seem
To hint a doubt, or any wish to match
(An easy task), from records of our own,
The simple story *Télémaque* had told ;
But one may hope that Jules—the veteran Jules—
Still trudges on his journey twice a day,
Distributing his mail with patient zeal,
Puzzling his wits with script illegible,
But leaving the right missive here and there
In old Oissel beside the brimming Seine.





THE ANCIENT BALLADS OF SPAIN.*

By ERNEST FLETCHER.

IN the history of all literatures poetry precedes prose.

It charms the ear, it is best suited for memory, and it has been aptly said that it was indeed the natural and proper frame of oral records, whether of law, of history, or of religion. Mankind has, from the earliest ages, been a lover of song and story, and the bard of the times of old was inferior only in importance and esteem to the hero of whose deeds he sang. His office was oftentimes an extremely lucrative one, and he was honoured by kings, and found a place among the seats of the mighty.

In this essay it is proposed to consider the history and poetic merit of the ancient ballads of Spain, of which it has been declared that they are not merely ballads, but historical and national poems, recording events and popular notions, giving details of the everyday life and habits of the people, and informing us of a state of things of which we know little, and which has now passed away for ever.

It has been claimed that the ballads of Spain, both in their multiplicity and their antiquity, surpass those of any other European people. One of the earliest collections of Spanish poetry that can be traced is the "Cancionero General" of Fernando del Castillo, which appeared at

* The translations into English verse are those of Mr. J. G. Lockhart.

Valencia in 1511, and, as its title-page indicates that the Cancionero contains ancient as well as modern pieces, we have here clear proof that some of the poetry, at all events, was considered of respectable antiquity so early as the beginning of the sixteenth century. This collection was followed in 1555 by the publication, at Antwerp, of the "Cancionero de Romances," and Eugenio de Ochoa declares that it contains ballads which were never previously seen in either print or manuscript, and that they were taken down by the compiler of the collection upon the recital of the poetry by those who had received it orally from previous generations.* The collection of Lorenzo de Sepúlveda appeared at Antwerp in 1566, the "Romancero General" at Madrid in 1604, and the ballads of the immortal Cid were first published in a collected form at Lisbon in 1615. The ballads have never been arranged in chronological order, although they fall naturally into three classes, which may be roughly defined the Historic, the Romantic, and the Moorish.

The historical ballads tell us of the heroes of the times of old—of Don Roderick, of Bernardo del Carpio, the Cid Campeador, and of other early champions whose names and deeds have been passed down to our generation through the clouds of stormy centuries. Bernardo is a brave figure in these ballads, and it is inspiring to read of his intrepid daring. King Alfonso, for instance, proposes to Charlemagne the inheritance of his throne as the price of an alliance with him. Bernardo, at the head of the nobility, strongly resents any such course of action.

* "Los romances contenidos en este Romancero raro y apreciable, nunca estuvieron ni impresos ni manuscritos, hasta que el editor los recogió de boca de las gentes que los conservaban por tradicion. Es tambien la primera coleccion de romances populares, pues los pocos que hay en los Cancioneros generales son de poetas del siglo XV., cuando los de aquel conservan vestigios de ser mucho mas antiguos." *Tesoro de los Roman-ceros y Cancioneros Españoles.*

They are freemen, not slaves, and they will not be subject to their Frankish enemy. Then the trumpet of war is sounded, the peasant leaves his team and the shepherd his crook, and Bernardo is at the head of three thousand men of Leon. Young and old, inspired by the common love of home and liberty, have all answered the call of their intrepid champion :

The youth who shows a maiden's chin, whose brows have ne'er been bound

The helmet's heavy ring within, gains manhood from the sound ;

The hoary sire beside the fire forgets his feebleness,

Once more to feel the cap of steel a warrior's ringlets press.

As through the glen his spears did gleam, these soldiers from the hills

They swelled his host as mountain stream receives the roaring rills ;

They round his banner flocked in scorn of haughty Charlemagne—

And thus upon their swords are sworn the faithful sons of Spain.

"Free were we born"—'tis thus they cry—"though to our king we owe

The homage and the fealty behind his crest to go ;

By God's behest our aid he shares, but God did ne'er command,

That we should leave our children heirs of an enslaved land.

"Our breasts are not so timorous, nor are our arms so weak, Nor are our veins so bloodless, that we our vow should break, To sell our freedom for the fear of prince or paladin ;

At least we'll sell our birthright dear—no bloodless prize they'll win.

"At least King Charles, if God decrees he must be Lord of Spain,
Shall witness that the Leonese were not aroused in vain;
He shall bear witness that we died as lived our sires of old—
Nor only of Numantium's pride shall minstrel tales be told.

"The lion that bathed his paws in seas of Libyan gore,
Shall he not battle for the laws and liberties of yore?
Anointed cravens may give gold to whom it likes them well,
But steadfast heart and spirit bold, Alfonso ne'er shall sell."

Bernardo now marches his followers to do battle with the French army, and he defeats them, after showing great personal bravery and inspiring his men with his own example, in the pass of Roncesvalles; and the superstitious will tell you that here it was where he encountered Orlando, one of the paladins of Charlemagne, whose only vulnerable part was the sole of his foot, and that he lifted him off the ground, as Hercules did Antæus, and squeezed him to death.

Some time afterwards Bernardo quarrels again with the King, for his father, the Count of Saldaña, has been thrown into prison, and deprived, indeed, of his sight. He quits the Court, where he has been such a distinguished figure, and fortifies himself in the Castle of Carpio, from whence he sallies forth ever and anon into Leonese territory, plundering anything upon which he can lay his hands. The King endeavours to subdue him, and storms his stronghold over and over again, but always in vain, for the defence is better than the attack. What cannot be accomplished, however, by force of arms is at length gained by strategy of the most treacherous kind. Several of the King's knights declare to their Sovereign that the only way in which the capitulation of the Castle of Carpio can ever be effected will be to promise Bernardo that his

father shall be restored to him. Thereupon the King promises Bernardo the possession of his father's person if he will but surrender the Castle. Bernardo accepts the offer with alacrity, and the King commands that the prisoner shall be brought, but brought as a corpse, to Salamanca, at which place his son is expecting him. After the unhappy man is murdered he is attired by his cruel persecutors in gorgeous apparel and mounted on a horse, and led thus towards the city where Bernardo is awaiting him. As the little procession approaches Bernardo rides forth to meet it. "O God!" he exclaims, as he draws nearer his father, "is the Count of Saldaña indeed coming at last!" In a little while he takes his father's hand to kiss it, but it is heavy and cold, and as he lifts up his eyes he sees with horror and dismay that his father, mounted there on horseback in grand array, is nothing but a lifeless corpse.

When next we meet with Bernardo in these ancient ballads it is a soul-stirring moment, for he is standing in the hall of the King's palace demanding vengeance from the King for the murder of his father. The King, who is surrounded by his lords, orders him to be seized. There is a solemn hush. It is broken by Bernardo, who, grasping the hilt of his trusty weapon, cries: "Here am I!—Bernardo!—and my sword owns no lord, excepting heaven and me!"

"The King that swerveth from his word hath stained his
purple black;
No Spanish lord will draw his sword behind a liar's back;
But noble vengeance shall be mine, an open hate I'll show—
The King hath injured Carpio's line, and Bernard is his foe."

"Seize, seize him!" loud the King doth scream; "there are a
thousand here!

Let his foul blood this instant stream:—What, caitiffs, do ye fear?

Seize, seize the traitor!" But not one to move a finger dareth;

Bernardo standeth by the throne, and calm his sword he bareth.

He drew the falchion from the sheath, and held it up on high,
And all the hall was still as death:—cries Bernard, "Here am I—

And here is the sword that owns no lord, excepting heaven and me;

Fain would I know who dares his point—King, Condé, or Grandee!"

Bernardo now draws his horn from beneath his cloak, and blows a great blast. Ten of his faithful soldiers instantly rush into the hall, and break through the circle which has closed round the brave and angry knight. Bernardo turns on his heel and leaves the palace with his men, and the King and his lords are left regretting that ill-starred day upon which they practised their cruel and murderous treachery on the son of the Count of Saldaña.

There is a name, however, which eclipses, in the Castilian imagination, that of Bernardo del Carpio—the name of Rodrigo Diaz, surnamed "the Cid." Rodrigo was born at Bivar, a village near the city of Burgos, probably between 1030 and 1040. He was of noble descent. He had early opportunities of showing his courage and his great prowess in war. In 1065 Fernando the First, on his deathbed, divided the territories of Castile, Leon, Galicia, Zamora and Toro, among his five children. Castile fell to the eldest son, Sancho; Leon to Alfonso; and Galicia to Garcia. Sancho deprived his brothers of their territory, and, in the wars which followed, Rodrigo threw in his lot with him, and became the head and forefront of his forces.

In 1072, King Sancho was assassinated, and Alfonso was brought from prison and placed upon the vacant throne. Had Rodrigo been a less powerful adversary he would now have been disgraced and dismissed from the Court of him against whom he had fought. But his time was not yet. In 1074 he married Ximena, daughter of Count Lozano de Gormaz and grand-daughter of Alfonso the Fifth. It is said that the original deed of the marriage-contract is still in existence. Seven years later we find him fighting for Alfonso against Abdallah, the then King of Granada, under the walls of Seville, and routing the enemy with great slaughter. He had been sent on an embassy to collect tribute from Motamid, the King of Seville, and had found him engaged in war with Abdallah. The Cid returned with numerous prisoners and rich booty, but his success did not serve him; it merely re-kindled among King and nobles the old fires of enmity and jealousy towards him. One of the Castilian knights, indeed, accused him before Alfonso of keeping back part of the tribute which he had collected from Seville; and the King soon afterwards banished him from his dominions.

Rodrigo Diaz now entered upon that roving and warlike, but independent, career which has made his name so famous. At the head of some few hundred men he first offered his services to the Count of Barcelona. It was Moctadir, the Arab King of Saragossa, however, who enlisted his services; and under him, and his successors Moutamin and Mostani, he served valiantly for eight years, carrying war into the Christian territory of Aragon and of Barcelona, and even threatening the border-lands of Castile. On the 15th of June, 1094, he achieved his greatest and most famous triumph, for on that day, at the head of seven thousand men, most of whom were Mahometans, he captured the city of Valencia, then the

fairest and most flourishing city throughout the Peninsula, after besieging it for nine months. During the next four years he ruled over the greater part of Valencia and Murcia; but his end was drawing near. He had several times defeated the Almoravides, but they at length inflicted a crushing defeat upon a branch of his army at Cuença. Soon after this event, in July, 1099, possibly from grief at his defeat, Rodrigo Diaz passed away. For three years longer, his widow, catching something of the Cid's spirit, held Valencia against the enemy, but was finally compelled, after a brave and memorable struggle, to capitulate. When she departed from the stronghold which she had held so long she took with her the body of her warrior-husband, so that it might rest within the shadow of the place where he was born. Four miles to the east of the city of Burgos, not far from the little village where Rodrigo Diaz first saw the light, stands the monastery of San Pedro. There, in the centre of the little monastery chapel, wrapped in the great silence, and resting from the storm and stress of a life of battles, sleeps the great Cid.

And so, through the medium of chronicle, and poem, and ballad, we are introduced, from times almost contemporaneous with his own, to this wonderful figure, the greatest hero whom Spain has ever known. The number of ballads alone concerning the Cid, and setting forth—in most exaggerated terms, it is true—his wonderful exploits, reaches nearly two hundred.

It is pleasant to turn from the recital of his deeds of daring and his prowess in war to ballads of a more peaceful character. Pleasant it is to read of his love for his charger Baveca, the horse which is well-nigh as famous as the Cid himself. In one of these ballads the Cid is represented as directing that when he is dead his body

shall be clad in armour and mounted upon Bavioca's back, and conveyed thus to the monastery of San Pedro. It is said that Bavioca survived his master for two years, during which period nobody was allowed to mount him, and that when Bavioca died he was buried under the trees opposite the monastery where his master was lying. "When ye bury Bavioca," says the Cid in his will, "dig deep; it would be a shameful thing should he be eaten by curs."

There is, too, the ballad of the Cid's wedding, and, although there is nothing remarkable about it, it is of some value as throwing a bright light on the customs of a day so far removed from our own. The wedding takes place in Burgos, and he is to marry the beautiful Ximena. There is great joy in the city, and crowds of citizens are parading the streets. Now the Lord Bishop comes forth, followed by the young Cid, "all in his bridal state." The crowd gives way before them, and they pursue their way along the gaily decorated streets:

The King hath taken order that they should rear an arch,
From house to house all over, in the way that they must
march;

They have hung it all with lances, and shields, and glittering
helms

Brought by the Campeador from out the Moorish realms.

They have scattered olive branches and rushes on the street,
And the ladies fling down garlands at the Campeador's feet;
With tapestry and broidery their balconies between,
To do his bridal honour, their walls the burghers screen.

They lead the bulls before them, all covered o'er with
trappings;

The little boys pursue them with hootings and with clappings;
The fool, with cap and bladder, upon his ass goes prancing,
Amidst troops of captive maidens with bells and cymbals
dancing.

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Then comes the bride Ximena—the King he holds her hand;
And the Queen; and, all in fur and pall, the nobles of the
land.

All down the street the ears of wheat are round Ximena flying,
But the King lifts off her bosom sweet, whatever there is lying.

We cannot take leave of the Cid without referring to
the ballad which sets forth how he encountered and
befriended the man by the wayside who was stricken with
leprosy. He is riding, with a body of his knights, to a
distant church, and as he goes along he is throwing alms
to the poor and feeble. Suddenly he observes and hears
the cry of a leper who is lying beside his path, and whom
nobody will come near:

When Roderick heard that piteous word, he from his horse
came down;

For all they said, no stay he made, that noble champion;
He reached his hand to pluck him forth, of fear was no ac-
count,

Then mounted on his steed of worth, and made the leper
mount.

Behind him rode the leprous man; when to their hostelrie
They came, he made him eat with him at table cheerfully;
While all the rest from that poor guest with loathing shrunk
away,

To his own bed the wretch he led—beside him there he lay.

The leper dies. As the Cid afterwards tosses on his
couch, his bedchamber is filled with a great, white light.
It is the spirit of the leper. "Sleepest thou, or wakest
thou, Sir Knight?" says the vision:

"I sleep not," quoth Rodrigo, "but tell me who art thou,
For, in the midst of darkness, much light is on thy brow?"

"I am the holy Lazarus—I come to speak with thee;
I am the same poor leper thou savedst for charity.

"Not vain the trial, nor in vain thy victory hath been ;
God favours thee, for that my pain thou didst relieve yestreen.

There shall be honour with thee, in battle and in peace,
Success in all thy doings, and plentiful increase."

When he these gracious words had said, the spirit vanished quite,

Rodrigo rose and knelt him down—he knelt till morning light ;

Unto the Heavenly Father, and Mary Mother dear,
He made his prayer right humbly, till dawned the morning clear.

This beautiful ballad may in all probability be founded upon some act of love and charity on the part of the Cid. It may, on the other hand, be nothing else but the outcome of a poet's imagination. But whether it be true or whether it be false matters not in this day, for it establishes for us, at all events, that in the mind and imagination of those ballad-writers of the times of old there was recognised the great central truth that a gentle heart may beat in the bravest and ruggedest of bosoms, and that a meek and humble spirit is not incompatible with great bravery and giant strength.

The next class of these ancient ballads is the Romantic. Among these are the ballads which set forth in a blaze of exaggerated detail the deeds of imaginary heroes, including the Twelve Peers of Charlemagne. And ballads there are which tell of love, and hate, and strange visions.

Then, too, there are the serenades, and difficult it is to read a song like that which follows without the inner eye of the imagination conjuring up the picture of the gallant of other days as he waits in the garden beneath the chamber of his lady-love. There he stands in the silver moonlight of a glorious night. His guitar is slung across

his shoulder, and his fervent face is upturned to the starlit sky. Suddenly the silence of the night is broken, but broken only by the lover's music, for his fingers have now touched the strings of his tuneful guitar, and his voice is singing sweet and low :

While my lady sleepeth,
The dark blue heaven is bright—
Soft the moonbeam creepeth
Round her bower all night.
Thou gentle, gentle breeze!
While my lady slumbers,
Waft lightly through the trees
Echoes of my numbers,
Her dreaming ear to please.
Should ye, breathing numbers
That for her I weave,
Should ye break her slumbers,
All my soul would grieve.
Rise on the gentle breeze,
And gain her lattice' height
O'er yon poplar trees—
But be your echoes light
As hum of distant bees.
All the stars are glowing,
In the gorgeous sky;
In the stream scarce flowing
Mimic lustres lie;
Blow, gentle, gentle, breeze!
But bring no cloud to hide
Their dear resplendencies;
Nor chase from Zara's side
Dreams bright and pure as these.

But among these romantic ballads there is none that even distantly approaches in pathos and dramatic intensity the ballad of the Count Alarcos and the Infanta Solisa.

It tells how the Count Alarcos is secretly betrothed to the royal princess, but how after some time he deserts her and marries a lady of the Court. Some years elapse and the Infanta is still unmarried. She begins to lament that her youth is passing away and that nobody comes to woo her. Now she becomes silent and morose, and finally she reveals to her father, the King, the cause of her melancholy and the story of her clandestine love for Alarcos. The King is considerably puzzled as to how he shall act, but the Princess suggests that he shall command Alarcos to put his Countess to death. It can, she argues, be announced everywhere that she has died a natural death, and Alarcos will then be able to come to her and ask for her hand in wedlock. The King acquiesces in this work of cruel vengeance, and Alarcos is soon informed that his wife must die that night, and by his own hand. The Count, of course, makes a pathetic appeal to the King to withdraw the heartless command, but it is all in vain, and we next find him wending his way homeward, sorrowful and dejected, to his own castle. His near approach is announced to his Countess, and she appears at the door with her three children, one of whom is but an infant, to give him welcome. She quickly observes that he droops his head and that he has been weeping, and she requests him to give her the cause of it. And then the ballad continues:

"I'll tell you all—I'll tell you all; it is not yet the hour;
We'll sup together in the hall—I'll tell you in your bower."
The lady brought forth what she had, and down beside him
sate;
He sate beside her pale and sad, but neither drank nor ate.

The children to his side were led—he loved to have them so—
Then on the board he laid his head, and out his tears did flow;

"I fain would sleep—I fain would sleep"—the Count Alarcos said;—

Alas! be sure, that sleep was none that night within their bed.

They came together to the bower where they were used to rest,
None with them but the little babe that was upon the breast;
The Count had barred the chamber doors—they ne'er were
barred till then;

"Unhappy lady," he began, "and I most lost of men!"

"Now, speak not so, my noble lord, my husband, and my life!
Unhappy never can she be that is Alarcos' wife."—

"Alas! unhappy lady, 'tis but little that you know,
For in that very word you've said is gathered all your woe.

"Long since I loved a lady—long since I oaths did plight,
To be that lady's husband, to love her day and night;
Her father is our lord the King, to him the thing is known,
And now, that I the news should bring! she claims me for her
own.

"Alas! my love!—alas! my life!—the right is on their side;
Ere I had seen your face, sweet wife, she was betrothed my
bride!

But, oh! that I should speak the word—since in her place you
lie,

It is the bidding of our lord that you this night must die."

"Are these the wages of my love, so lowly and so leal?

Oh, kill me not, thou noble Count, when at thy foot I kneel!
But send me to my father's house, where once I dwelt in glee,
There will I live a lone, chaste life, and rear my children
three."

"It may not be—mine oath is strong—ere dawn of day you
die!"

"Oh! well 'tis seen how all alone upon the earth am I;

My father is an old frail man—my mother's in her grave—
And dead is stout Don Garci—alas! my brother brave!

" 'Twas at this coward King's command they slew my brother
dear,

And now I'm helpless in the land: it is not death I fear,
But loth, loth am I to depart, and leave my children so—
Now let me lay them to my heart, and kiss them ere I go."

" Kiss him that lies upon thy breast—the rest thou mayst not
see."

" I fain would say an *Avé*." " Then say it speedily."

She knelt her down upon her knee: " Oh, Lord! behold my
case—

Judge not my deeds, but look on me in pity and great grace."

When she had made her orison, up from her knees she rose—

" Be kind, Alarcos, to our babes, and pray for my repose;
And now give me my boy once more upon my breast to hold,
That he may drink one farewell drink, before my breast be
cold."

" Why would you waken the poor child?—you see he is asleep;
Prepare, dear wife, there is no time, the dawn begins to
peep."

" Now hear me, Count Alarcos! I give thee pardon free—
I pardon thee for the love's sake wherewith I've lovéd thee."

The Countess now utters a curse on the King and the
Infanta Solisa, and prophecies that " ere thirty days be
gone " they will both be dead, and she charges them to
meet her at the throne of God. With a scarf Alarcos now
strangles the hapless lady; but one finds with a sigh of
great relief that the ballad concludes by showing us that
the prophecy of the dying Countess is fulfilled, for within
twelve days of the cruel deed the Infanta pines away, and
a few days later the King follows her. Ere the month has
gone Alarcos himself is dead, and thus, as the ballad tells

us, "three guilty spirits stand right soon before God's judgment seat."

This dark, Spanish story gives us tragedy indeed, and I venture to think that in this respect it should rank and range with those stories that are better known to the world than is this ballad of the Count Alarcos and the Infanta Solisa. It is doubtful if there can be found in the whole domain of poetic literature an incident at once so grandly simple, so natural and so touching as the final appeal of the doomed mother that her infant boy shall be allowed, if only for a brief moment, to nestle once again within her bosom, that he may take there his last suck at her warm breast by way of farewell.

I have been unable to find that this ballad is founded on fact. The story belongs, it is true, to an age far removed from our own civilised days, and there may possibly have been perpetrated some foul deed or other upon which the ballad has been founded. There was often enough in those early days, particularly in Spain, a reverence for the will of the sovereign, and an unquestioning obedience to his awful commands, that we can scarcely comprehend in these later times. Oftentimes, too, there was exhibited an exaggerated and grossly mistaken sense of honour and duty which made men commit deeds from which our minds to-day recoil with horror and revulsion. I am thinking, for instance, as I write these lines, of the cruel deed of Alfonso Perez de Guzman, who was Governor of Tarifa about the close of the thirteenth century. When he was besieged there, the enemy, who had Guzman's son in his power, exclaimed that he would kill the youth unless Tarifa was evacuated. "Rather than be guilty of such treason, I will lend you a dagger to carry out your threat!" replied Guzman, and so saying he tossed his dagger over the wall to his enemy. His patriotism and

devotion to duty were not appreciated, however, and his son was immediately slain without remorse.

I cannot leave the romantic ballads without referring to the romance of Vergilius. I have never seen any translation into English verse of this ballad, although Longfellow has given a brief paraphrase of it. The story may be related thus. Vergilius has committed a grave indiscretion with a certain Isabel, one of the ladies attendant upon the Queen. The King, hearing of this, consigns him to prison. Vergilius has been in prison seven years, when one Sunday, whilst at Mass, the King suddenly recollects him. "My gentlemen!" he exclaims to his knights, "what has become of Vergilius?" One of the knights, who loves Vergilius, replies that his Highness had imprisoned him, and that he still remains in the prison. The King then suggests that they should all dine, and afterwards go to see the prisoner, but the Queen here interrupts with, "I will not dine without him!" and thereupon they all proceed to the prison.

Vergilius is found combing and arranging his hair and beard. "What doest thou here, Vergilius? What doest thou here?" asks the King. The imprisoned knight replies, with great coolness, that he is combing his hair and his beard also, and then adds: "It is just seven years to-day since you imprisoned me here." This trifling is not appreciated by the King. "Be silent, Vergilius! for three years more will make it ten!" The prisoner now becomes courtly, and exclaims that if his Highness commands it he shall gladly remain there all his life. "For your patience, you shall dine with me," says the King. Vergilius explains that his clothes are in holes, and that he is not fit to make an appearance. "I will give you clothes, Vergilius; I will command that they be given you, for it will please the gentlemen, the ladies also, and

much more pleased indeed will be the Doña Isabel." An archbishop is quickly summoned, Vergilius and Isabel are married, and when we last see them Vergilius takes Isabel by the hand and "leads her to a garden." I have found this interesting little ballad in Ochoa's "Tesoro," and give it here in its native dress:—

Mandó el rey prender Vergilius
Y á recaudo le poner
Por una traicion que hizo
En los palacios del rey.
Porque forzó una doncella
Llamada doña Isabel,
Siete años lo tuvo preso,
Sin que se acordase dél;
Y un domingo estando en misa
Vínole memoria dél.
" Mis caballeros, Vergilius
Que se habia hecho dél?"
Allí hablo un caballero
Que á Vergilius quiere bien:
" Preso lo tiene tu alteza,
Y en tus cárceles lo tienen."
" Via comer, mis caballeros,
Caballeros, via comer,
Despues que háyamos comido
A Vergilius vamos ver.—"
Allí hablára la reina:
" Y no comeré sin él.—"
A las cárceles se van
Adonde Vergilius es.
" Qué haceis vos aquí, Vergilius?
Vergilius, que aquí haceis?"
" Señor, peino mis cabellos,
Y las mis barbas tambien;
Aquí me fueron nacidas,
Aquí me han de encanecer

Que hoy se cumplen siete años
Que me mandaste prender.”
“ Calles, calles tú, Vergilius,
Que tres faltan para diez.”
“ Señor, si manda tu alteza,
Toda mi vida estaré.”
“ Vergilius, por tu paciencia
Connigo viás á comer.”
“ Rotos tengo mis vestidos,
No estoy para parecer.”
“ Yo te los daré, Vergilius,
Yo dártelos mandaré.—
Plúgole á los caballeros
Y á las doncellas tambien ;
Mucho mas plugo á una dueña
Llamada doña Isabel.”
Llaman luego un arzobispo,
Y la desposan con él.
Tomárala por la mano,
Y llévasela á un vergel.

Lastly come the Moorish ballads, and here we enter a different world from that which knew the Cid Campeador and Bernardo del Carpio and the other mail-clad forms of earlier days. I sometimes wonder if there is anything more dramatic and picturesque in the history of the world than the story of the Moors in Spain, from the time when, at the beginning of the eighth century, they swept across the Peninsula like a mighty whirlwind, until their final overthrow by Ferdinand and Isabella some seven hundred years later !

The Spanish ballads, of course, do not possess the value of historical documents, and yet, as Prescott has declared, they may perhaps be received in evidence of the social relations of the age which they represent. And this expression of opinion is of some value, for here in these

romances we find many illustrations which are quite contrary to our knowledge of the Mahometan attitude of the present day towards the female sex. It is quite clear from the ballads that an unreserved intercourse existed between the sexes, and that latitude in the privileges accorded to females, similar to that observed by Christians, was practised by these Spanish Arabs. Several writers, indeed, have cited the frescoes on the walls of the Alhambra in corroboration of the scenes suggested by the ballads, which represent the presence of ladies at the tournaments, and the brave knight receiving at their hands the reward of his hard-won victory.

The Moorish knights revelled in the bull-fight and the tournament, and striking enough is the ballad of the bull-fight of Gazul, the Alcaide of Algava. It sets forth that King Almanzor has summoned all the Moorish lords from the country surrounding the city of Granada to gather within the arena in the vicinity of the Alhambra. Eight Moorish cavaliers have tried their valour in the ring, and, although they have done great things before, they all suffer defeat on this particular occasion. Excitement is now running high, but is there not another yet to enter the arena—the brave Gazul of Algava? The silver clarion is sounded and the Moorish atabal is beaten, and voices are ringing out sharp and clear:

“Make room, make room for Gazul!—throw wide, throw wide
the door!

Blow, blow the trumpet clearer still—more loudly strike
the drum!

The Alcaide of Algava to fight the bull doth come.”

Three bulls are now led into the ring, and the knight has despatched two of them, when the third—Harpado by name—rushes furiously towards him from behind. “Turn,

Gazul—turn!" cry the people as the beast rushes along with his nose almost in the sand. And here is the vivid description of the bull whom Gazul has now to face :

From Guadiana comes he not, he comes not from Xenil,
From Guadalarif of the plain, or Barves of the hill;
But where from out the forest burst Xarama's waters clear,
Beneath the oak trees was he nursed—this proud and
stately steer.

Dark is his hide on either side, but the blood within doth
boil,
And the dun hide glows, as if on fire, as he paws to the
turmoil.
His eyes are jet, and they are set in crystal rings of snow;
But now they stare with one red glare of brass upon the
foe.

Upon the forehead of the bull the horns stand close and
near,
From out the broad and wrinkled skull like daggers they
appear;
His neck is massy, like the trunk of some old knotted tree,
Whereon the monster's shagged mane, like billows curled,
ye see.

His legs are short, his hams are thick, his hoofs are black
as night,
Like a strong flail he holds his tail in fierceness of his
might;
Like something molten out of iron, or hewn from forth the
rock,
Harpado of Xarama stands, to bide the Alcaide's shock.

The drums are no longer sounding. There is a silence
now that may almost be felt. The Moorish knight and
Harpado are in deadly combat. Three times does the
beast furiously charge Gazul, and as many times he is

driven back. And now the bull rushes once more on his antagonist, but Gazul, amid the tumultuous shouts and cries of the excited crowd, adroitly drives his weapon straight home, and Harpado falls dead at his feet.

The Moorish ballads, as has been well said, present to us not only the exterior form, but the noble spirit of European chivalry, combined with the gorgeousness and effeminate luxury of the East. They tell us of the amours of the magnificent Court of Granada, the bull-feast and the tournament, the bloody feuds of the Zegris and the Abencerrages, and of fierce combat between Moor and Christian. The stolen interview, the moonlight serenade, the grand bridal procession—all are here, moving before our eyes with all the pomp and circumstance of living pictures.

It is impossible to afford here many illustrations of these heart-stirring incidents, but how finely dramatic and picturesque and touching is the ballad of the bridal of Andalla! It is Andalla's wedding day. He is riding forth in great state and ceremony through the crowded and decorated streets. The whole town is proudly gazing on him. Now the grand procession is passing the home of Xarifa, who is sad and crestfallen, for she loves him, and it is her cousin Zara whom he will wed to-day. She cannot be prevailed upon to approach the window, and is vainly endeavouring to embroider a flower upon a silken cushion. She can hear the tumult and the music without. Suddenly the voice of her sister is raised in exclamation:

“ Rise up, rise up, Xarifa! lay the golden cushion down;
Rise up, come to the window, and gaze with all the town!
From gay guitar and violin the silver notes are flowing,
And the lovely lute doth speak between the trumpet's lordly
blowing.

And banners bright from lattice light are waving every-
where,
And the tall, tall plume of our cousin's bridegroom floats
proudly in the air.
Rise up, rise up, Xarifa! lay the golden cushion down,
Rise up, come to the window, and gaze with all the town!

"Arise, arise, Xarifa! I see Andalla's face—
He bends him to the people with a calm and princely grace;
Through all the land of Xeres and banks of Guadalquivir
Rode forth bridegroom so brave as he, so brave and lovely
never.
Yon tall plume waving o'er his brow, of purple mixed with
white,
I guess 'twas wreathed by Zara, whom he will wed to-night.
Rise up, rise up, Xarifa! lay the golden cushion down;
Rise up, come to the window, and gaze with all the town!

"What aileth thee, Xarifa—what makes thine eyes look
down?
Why stay ye from the window far, nor gaze with all the
town?
I've heard you say on many a day, and sure you said the
truth,
Andalla rides without a peer among all Granada's youth:
Without a peer he rideth, and yon milk-white horse doth go
Beneath his stately master, with a stately step and slow:—
Then rise—oh! rise, Xarifa, lay the golden cushion down;
Unseen here through the lattice, you may gaze with all the
town."
The Zegri lady rose not, nor laid her cushion down,
Nor came she to the window to gaze with all the town;
But though her eyes dwelt on her knee, in vain her fingers
strove,
And though her needle pressed the silk, no flower Xarifa
wove;

One bonny rose-bud she had traced before the noise drew
nigh—

That bonny bud a tear effaced, slow drooping from her
eye—

“No—no!” she sighs—“bid me not rise, nor lay my
cushion down,

To gaze upon Andalla with all the gazing town.”

“Why rise ye not, Xarifa—nor lay your cushion down—

Why gaze ye not, Xarifa—with all the gazing town?

Hear, hear the trumpet how it swells, and how the people
cry:

He stops at Zara’s palace gate—why sit ye still—oh, why?”

“At Zara’s gate stops Zara’s mate; in him shall I dis-
cover,

The dark-eyed youth pledged me his truth with tears, and
was my lover:

I will not rise, with weary eyes, nor lay my cushion down,

To gaze on false Andalla with all the gazing town!”

At length in these Moorish ballads the sounds of coming warfare are heard. Trumpets are sounding, and banners are flying. The Christians are at the gates of the city of Alhama and the days of the Moorish occupation of Spain are indeed numbered. The city is some five-and-twenty miles south-west of Granada and the land-key to the Moorish kingdom, for it is built along the crest of a rocky eminence, at the base of which the Marchan rolls its swift current through the awful ravine. Alhama, the resort of Moorish kings, the *dépôt* for the public taxes on land, famed for its baths, and celebrated throughout the kingdom of Granada for its manufactures of cloth, is doomed. The Spanish *escaladores*, or scalers, are clambering over the outworks of the city, and their comrades have rushed the gate and are now dashing through the streets. The Moors are discharging

shot and arrow at their assailants and are pouring boiling oil and pitch upon their heads. But it is all in vain, for the dauntless Spaniards win the day, and great is the price of victory—grain and oil and provisions, pearls and jewels, gold and silver plate, fine silks and cloths and all the booty which belongs to the capture of a prosperous city. Christian captives are found in the prisons and their voices are soon helping to swell the cries of triumph and victory. Alhama! Alhama, from whose lofty minarets the muezzin has for so long sung his clear chant and summoned the faithful to prayer, has fallen, and now, instead of the sign of the Crescent, the banner of the Cross is floating in the breeze.

The capture of this great stronghold was the precursor of the downfall and final ruin of the kingdom of Granada, and it opened the very floodgates of Moorish sorrow and lamentation. Soon after the fall of the city, there was composed the famous lament "Woe is me, Alhama!" and it is said that, such was the painful effect it had upon the Moorish mind, it was impossible to sing it within the walls of Granada without courting instant death. How mournful is the ballad and how full of lament is that oft-repeated *Ay de mi Alhama!*—

Passeavase el Rey Moro
Por la ciudad de Granada,
Desde las puertas de Elvira
Hasta las de Bivarambla.
Ay de mi Alhama!

Lord Byron, as is well known, has faithfully rendered this ballad into English.

It has been asserted, with some truth, that the Spanish ballads are, generally speaking, inferior to those of our own country, and it should perhaps cause little surprise

that in such an extensive collection of poetry a great deal of it should be but of an indifferent quality. The specimens already given are, however, not only far removed beyond the mediocre stage, but are, I venture to think, right worthy of our admiration.

I endeavoured, at the outset of this paper, by referring to the sixteenth-century Cancioneros, to indicate the antiquity of the ballads of Spain. Several authors have attempted to discover, by the form of versification and otherwise, exactly what stamp of antiquity the older ballads really possess, and they have come to the conclusion that many of them belong to periods so remote as the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and that in all probability the greater part belong to the fourteenth century. It must, however, be a difficult question for anybody to solve with final satisfaction, because repeated allusions are found, in the *Crónica General*, which was compiled by command of Alfonso the Wise in the thirteenth century, to the then existing ballads of the minstrels; and he would be a bold man who, in the face of such evidence, could declare precisely how long the ballads had been passed down orally and by tradition from sire to son. Exactly when, and by whom, the ancient ballads were originally composed, nobody indeed can tell us. The men who first composed them died centuries ago, and they passed away like the transient shadows of a summer's day. The ballads of these unknown poets, however, as we have seen, lived long after them, chanted by a brave and generous people in that southern land of unclouded skies, and in that musical language which is second only to Italian in its sonorousness and its flexibility. And so at length, down the stream of time, we find Lope de Vega enthusiastically referring to the ballads as those "*Iliads—Iliads without a Homer,*" and Cervantes, through the medium of

one of the characters in that world-famous book with which his name will ever be associated, making reference to them as being "in everybody's mouth and sung by the boys about the streets."

Wonderful and strange is the magic of popular poetry! How marvellous is its influence, how potent its power over the hearts and minds of men! The seventeenth-century contemporary of Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun who said that he believed that if a man were permitted to make all the ballads, he need not care who should make the laws of a nation, was guilty, no doubt, of an exaggerated view of the power and influence of national poetry. But we all know how great poetry—and it is greatest when it is simplest—will send the electric thrill of emotion through the hearts of men, and how indeed, as has been well said, it will sway and move the masses as easily as the passing breeze sways the bending corn.

Happy the nation which retains its love for, and which treasures, its songs and ballads—those songs which not only tell of

old, unhappy, far-off things,
And battles long ago—

but which also help us, as nothing else can possibly do, to bear aloft and pass on from generation to generation the bright torch of lofty sentiments and national characteristics. "For," exclaims an anonymous writer, "the ballads of a nation make a stand against, and correct the encroachments of heartless, selfish, artificial manners—they elevate men above the earthy tendency of over-civilisation, of cold, calculating materialism, by chanting of things rare and stately, yet in that simple style which touches every heart in every age, because the language and sentiments are in sympathy with all the common and natural affections of man."



MY FRIEND, TODDLES.

By J. D. ANDREW.

MR. ADOLPHUS ROBINSON, better known in our family circle as "Toddles," was introduced to us one November day by a winsome young lady friend, who brought him in her arms as a birthday present to my youngest daughter. To prevent misconception, let me say he was a Pomeranian pup, about a month old. A dash of the blood of an Indian terrier in his system was perhaps accountable for a certain weird Mahatma-like intelligence, which distinguished him in after life. At first sight he was simply a fluffy ball, fawn and white in colour, squat in form—afterwards he became an object of general admiration, to every passing child, a "booflums doggie." His name came by a process of evolution. Observation of his self-important carriage decided us that no trivial appellation would suit him. "Mr. Adolphus Robinson" was selected as appropriate, but was found to be rather a mouthful.

So, as he grew more affable and raised no objection, we called him familiarly "Dolly" and "Toddles," the latter finally gaining acceptance as happily expressive of his mode of locomotion. He was built up of belly and members, the former being the predominating partner to which his brain was unfailingly subservient.

At a very early age he manifested considerable sagacity, which attained, however, its highest development when an appeal was made to his stomach by tit-bits from the table or the sideboard. He was not ashamed to beg, and, indeed was so good a beggar that we had some thoughts of utilising him at our church bazaar. He could sit up—being fundamentally adapted for the task—for ever, so long at least as there was a prospect of gaining by it. With a biscuit on his nose, deposited on trust, though the saliva ran from his mouth as longingly he gazed cross-eyed at the deferred dainty, he would wait until the words “paid for” told him he might take his reward. This, of course, was nothing more than hundreds of dogs will do. But he would wait patiently if required while you slowly counted numerals, and not until you mentioned three, as in thirteen or twenty-three, would he take the cake.

Speaking as a Tory and a Ritualist, I am glad to say his heart was in the right place. He scorned the proffered dainty if he were told that Gladstone sent it or Sir William Harcourt or Parnell or Leadam, but took it without any hesitation if coming from Lord Salisbury, Mr. Balfour or Mr. Disraeli. Similarly, while gladly accepting a gift from Lord Halifax he would have no boon from Kensit, however tempted. He would even die—or pretend to do—to gain his end, when, lying stretched out on the floor, he would await the permission to be alive again; but neither persuasion nor coercion could induce him to close his eyes when dead, which, as he lay, remained lovingly fixed on the guerdon of his martyrdom.

But alas! all these exhibitions depended upon an expected gain, and it was in vain I endeavoured to teach him the nobility of self-denial, forgetful that the lower animals can never rival man in lofty and altruistic ideals.

It must be sorrowfully admitted that Toddles was a gourmand—his god was his belly. We winked at his weakness, but it was inexcusable when one afternoon he dragged down from the kitchen table the remnant of a shoulder of mutton just out from dinner. He brought upon himself a terrible punishment. The bone was tied round his neck, and for days he was a laughing-stock in the lane, while maddened by the assiduous attentions of his canine brethren who kept pressing him to wait a while. His excessive greediness was quite deplorable, and disgusted Mustard, the cat, from whom he was once detected begging. He would have helped himself, but the cat's plate had been put on the dresser to be safe from him. Dinners for the two were usually served on the scullery floor, but Toddles, not content with his own, would, unless prevented, first eat the cat's share. He would, however, allow no interference with what was his, and would furiously attack any intruder. When satiated he would convey to some corner what he could not eat, and, lying down beside it, would snap angrily at anyone approaching his hoard. My daughter found the long brush to be an effective weapon against him, but with unfortunate results, as afterwards, taking in hand the long brush—though for peaceful domestic use, was regarded by Toddles as a declaration of war—he would dash at it and make his teeth meet in the bristles.

One winter afternoon Jack and I, driven for our smoke from the dining-room to the kitchen hearth, were amused to notice Toddles conveying his dinner bones (turkey that day) one by one from his dish in the scullery to his box by the fireside. A happy inspiration prompting, we deftly transferred them as he went to and fro to the oven-top until he arrived with the last bone, and gazed astounded at an empty box. However, he deposited that one also, and

returned to the scullery, thinking perchance he hadn't really made his pile. When he came back again and found the box absolutely empty his astonishment was indescribable. He said to himself, "Can such things be and overcome us like a summer cloud?" He looked at us gravely, and then, suddenly catching sight of the cat, who just that moment leisurely walked in, he flew in a mad fury at Mustard, who, surprised beyond measure, darted under the dresser, where Toddles, owing to his corpulence, could not follow. But then it suddenly occurred to him that perhaps it was not the cat's fault; it was just possible he might have stored his treasures elsewhere, and he trotted off to see if perchance he had put them in the dining-room. While he was away we replaced the bones, and awaited the dénouement. Slowly and sadly he returned, and, looking once more into his box, beheld with amazement its contents. He stood pondering and puzzled, and though he had not the gift of speech his mental ejaculation was, beyond all doubt, "Well, I'm d——d!" But he got into the box and subsided without further remark.

Ever considerate of Number One, from the first he sought out comfortable quarters, and it was difficult to convince him that a bed, a couch, or an arm-chair was reserved for his betters. Yet he was not averse to outdoor exercise—in moderation—and "Get your hat, Toddles!" would send him frantic with joyous anticipation. His taste was for rurality, and, if I directed my steps townwards he would go but a few yards and then dejectedly return. The turmoil of the town, with its bustling life and its clattering wheels, its mischievous lads and troublesome dogs, was utterly distasteful. His attitude towards his own species was one of armed neutrality, but there must have been something obnoxious

about him, as it would frequently happen that, when stopping to have a word with another dog he would suddenly (owing, I expect, to his making *sotto voce* some offensive remark) be violently attacked and rolled in the mud. Cabs he abhorred, and used to furiously bark at the revolving wheels (perhaps from a Tory aversion to revolutions) until one day he rushed actually among the spokes and was ignominiously dashed down. This deterred him from continuing any such display of animosity against the cause of progress.

A certain performance was invariable at our exit from the house. Barking furiously, he would rush out of the front garden into the lane, leap about madly for a minute or two, and then settle down to a sober walk. But the common objects of the country interested him but little. He would look with apathy at a hare or a rabbit, though it crossed our path—the idea of trying to catch one never occurred to him. Indeed his lack of interest in the animal and vegetable world around him was disgraceful, but he would go wild with delight when he could indulge in a mazy gallop through meadow grass or golden grain.

He became as one possessed when I took him out with me to the back garden, and in his eagerness usually tumbled headlong down the seventeen steps into the yard. Gyrating and barking impatiently while I unbolted the yard door, again going through the same business at the garden gate, he would then dart like an arrow across the tennis-lawn and up the north walk, disappearing behind the espaliers; finally returning by the south walk, he would reappear walking sedately as if he were quite another dog. After all this he would leave me, and return to the house, going, however, round to the front door and barking for admission. Whenever at any time he found

the front garden gate shut he would wait patiently until some passer-by approached, when, sitting up in the path, he would, mutely appealing by first looking at the stranger and then at the gate, signify his wish to have it opened for him. He could easily get out through the rails, but not so easily get in, and on fine Sunday afternoons he would often amuse himself by leaping out and then imploring the kindly passer-by to open the gate for him; one day he did this four times in succession. Perhaps he thought it was All Fools' Day.

As a general thing he ordered himself lowly and reverently to all his betters, and rendered due obedience to all that are put in authority. But he seemed to dislike the police, rather regarding them, I imagine, as Dog Tax Inquisitors, and one New Year's Eve, when I had lured into the house the sergeant and our worthy officer, he retired under the couch declining all their overtures of friendship. The Dog Tax troubled him much. One January, when I had omitted to take out his licence, he was found half a mile away haunting the post-office, and so reminded me of the danger of delay. Possibly owing to police inquisition in this regard, Toddles thoroughly hated one active and intelligent member of the force, while yet paying due respect to his office. But when that policeman retired into private life and he became a gardener, Toddles took an early opportunity of attempting to bite him, in which wicked design he was happily thwarted by superior agility and thick boots.

I cannot truthfully say that Toddles grew wiser and better as life wore away. With age there became offensively manifest an increased love of ease, of warmth, of good living. He grew peevish and spiteful. Mustard, the cat, was no longer his rival in our affection, for we had found him dead at the back-door one morning, and had buried

him honourably under the garden hedge; so Toddles reigned solus, feeding sumptuously every day.

He had no taste for music or painting, and cared little for the gaities of society. We took him with us to Llandudno, where he duly appeared in the list of visitors at our lodgings as "Mr. Toddles." Though after this a number of dogs left their cards, I don't think he returned any calls. He was rather supercilious. The promenade wearied him, his soul revolted at Punch's Toby, who bore a family resemblance to him, and he would leave us to find his way back to the house, where, basking in the front garden, he could enjoy the smell of dinner. He soon begged his way into the kitchen and into the hearts of all there; tried, not in vain, his little fascinating tricks, and was rewarded for his fulsome adulation by a repletion of stomach forbidden by our stricter dietary.

At the age of fourteen signs of senile decay were unpleasantly evident. A canker in the ear tormented him, and he would scratch it madly, though the scratching caused him to yell with pain. He became deaf, then purblind, and, finally, that stomach he had so pampered turned against him. Weary of existence, a morose cynic, he took to a life of seclusion, and forsook altogether the pomps and vanities of this wicked world and all the sinful desires of the flesh. That being so, it was considered desirable to facilitate his release from a world of woe. So the fiat went forth. I paid a visit to a veterinary surgeon's yard, and, feeling like Macbeth, purchasing murder, made known my desire to a callous young man, who was chewing something. Next morning, at the time appointed, just as I had finished breakfast, the young man arrived (still chewing something and unspeakably callous). On his appearance my family fled in horror to remote chambers. Toddles that morning seemed to have a

foreboding of his fate. He had been absent from my breakfast-table and had hidden away in a dark corner of the kitchen. He allowed me to pick him up, when I found, to my surprise, that he was trembling all over, as if dreading the impending horror. I carried him down to the garden tool-shed, where the villain of the piece awaited me, and, setting him gently upon the floor, gave him a final pat, said, "Good-bye, Toddles," and dashed back into the house. After a painful interval, venturing forth, I found the murderer calmly strolling round the garden. He reported that he had done the deed with prussic acid, and that his victim had yelped just once and then died. Toddles had, however, previously managed to bite his murderer, for which, though he did not display good taste in doing so, I rather admired him.

We buried him with due solemnity at the garden gate under a flag which covered a filled-up well. To carve on his gravestone a "Requiescat in pace" would have been futile. Our place swarmed with rats which had their runs through the garden, and, no doubt, they soon found him out. But I don't think he would care. When he was alive and asleep at night in the kitchen they sometimes annoyed him—it may have been they wanted to eat him—and he, not seldom, roused us at midnight by his angry remonstrances, but he would not, I am sure, have given them any cause for animosity, and their disturbance of his slumber was ungenerous in the extreme.

In this brief memoir of my departed friend I have nothing extenuated nor set down aught in malice. He had his faults; he was selfish, avaricious, luxurious and passionate. But such failings are not uncommonly met with in men and without the virtues which won our affection for Toddles. In that little body of his there throbbed a great heart, and much shall be forgiven him because he loved much.



A POET'S WEDDING JOURNEY.

By GEO. H. BELL.

THE North Riding of Yorkshire abounds in objects of varied interest. For the Historian, the Artist, and the Antiquarian, it provides a happy hunting ground. If its scenery is not of the very highest order it is of considerable merit, and artists, including Turner, have loved to depict its beauties.

It possesses ecclesiastical remains which would suffice for any ordinary shire, and the ruined abbeys and priories of Riveaulx, Easby, Jervaulx, Whitby, Rosedale, Byland, Coverham and Mount Grace bear striking testimony to the estimation in which it was held by the monks of old.

That it attracted the Norman Baron as well as the Norman clergy is evidenced by the castles of Middleham, Bolton, Richmond, Scarbro' and Helmsley, which are stately even in their ruins, and recall some of the most stirring scenes in our national history.

But beautiful as are its hills and dales, and fascinating as are its ruins, it is not rich in literary associations. Nor is this to be wondered at when the character of the people and their principal occupation are taken into account. Essentially a matter of fact race, given up almost entirely

to agricultural pursuits, it is not likely that literature would find much sustenance among them. For hundreds of years they have lead quiet, humdrum lives, father succeeding son, without much to mark the difference between one generation and another.

No great poet has been born within the Riding, and of prose writers it can only boast of two sons who claim a prominent position in the world of letters—Wycliffe, who has been called the Father of English Prose, and Roger Ascham, the tutor of Queen Elizabeth. It is true that it was for a time the home of Sydney Smith and Laurence Sterne, but their residence in Yorkshire was only a temporary one, although in both instances it extended over several years.

At a later date, and in a less degree, another clergyman attained more than a local celebrity through his books, and Canon Atkinson, the author of "Forty Years in a Moorland Parish," will always be more or less identified with the North Riding although, like his illustrious predecessors, he was not "native and to the manner born."

The Wizard of the North wrote at least one of his novels at Rokeby, and Dickens found the subject matter for one of his greatest works at Bowes, but, speaking generally, native literary efforts have not attained any great distinction.

It is not surprising, therefore, that with this dearth of literary associations, the Riding carefully treasures up those to which it has the slenderest claim, and assiduously cherishes the memory of trifling events which, in other districts would be passed over and entirely forgotten.

Among such incidents Wordsworth's wedding journey finds a place, and we cannot forget when thinking of it that although a Cumberland-born man, Wordsworth

sprang from a Yorkshire stock. We remember also that like Peter Bell, the poet,

. . . . had trudged through Yorkshire dales
Among the rocks and winding scars;
Where deep and low the hamlets lie
Beneath their little patch of sky
And little lot of stars.

Hartleep Well and Leeming Lane are both situate in the North Riding, and Wordsworth must frequently have crossed its Dales on his journeyings to and from Sockburn—the home for a time of Mary Hutchinson.

To some who have experienced what Matthew Arnold calls "Wordsworth's healing power," who are neither disposed on the one hand to make a fetich of him, or on the other to be continually carping at his weaknesses—such an important event in his life as marriage cannot fail to be of interest. If his wife had been a very ordinary woman this would have been so, but there is ample testimony, other than Wordsworth's well-known eulogium, that Mary Wordsworth was, in her way, quite as admirable as Dorothy, and to say that is no mean praise.

Fortunately the latter has left us so graphic an account of the wedding journey that we can easily follow it—from the time the poet and his sister left Grasmere until they returned to Dove Cottage, bringing with them Mary Wordsworth and what De Quincey calls her "radiant graciousness."

On Friday morning, July 9, 1802, William and Dorothy Wordsworth set out from Grasmere for Gallow Hill. Spending a day or two with Coleridge at Keswick, and Clarkson at Eusemere, they joined the London coach near Penrith on the 14th. The road they took has "matrimony" writ very large upon it, for it was the route to Gretna

Green from a large part of England, and there is ample evidence that it was well used for this purpose by runaway couples. Every posting house had its postillion lore, its stories to tell of hairbreadth escapes, of abstracted linch pins, of bribes to post boys and trunpike keepers, of occasional captures and reconciliations. Doubtless, as regards many Gretna Green marriages, Boots arrived at a very sound conclusion when he said: "it would be a jolly good thing for a great many couples on their way to be married if they could only be stopped in time and brought back separately." Even at that period the village of Bowes was not entirely unknown to fame, for it was the scene of the "Bowes Tragedy, a Pattern of True Love," a ballad which would certainly be known to Scott if not to Wordsworth.

Mrs. Squeers might have been administering brimstone and treacle at Dotheboys Hall when the coach passed through, and Squeers himself might have joined it there unless, for some reason, he preferred driving the six miles to Greta Bridge, where he alighted on his return from London.

Of this he may be perfectly certain, that

Brignall banks were fresh and fair
And Greta Woods were green.

as they are to-day, and as they were when, ten years later than Wordsworth's journey, Walter Scott made known their chances to a reading public, and "Rokeby" became a household world.

A few years after Wordsworth and his sister passed Greta Bridge, Dr. Whitaker published his "History of Craven," which contained the curious old ballad "The Felon Sow of Rokeby, and the Fryers of Richmond." This records in quaint language the doings of an untract-

able animal which flourished in the time of Henry VII., and it needs a glossary for every verse.

"At Thirsk" Dorothy says "we were well treated, but when the landlady understood that we were going to *walk off* and leave our luggage behind she threw out some saucy words in our hearing." This is always of interest to us, for after stopping in the same Inn about a hundred years later and setting off to walk over the Hambleton hills just as our travellers did, a native in our hearing spoke of us very disparagingly as "some of those walking folks," and evidently regarded those who walked when they could ride as little better than imbeciles.

As the wedding was not to take place until October, the Wordsworths, after a fortnight spent at Gallow Hall, left for a short tour on the Continent.

Charles Lamb, writing to Coleridge on the 8th of September, 1802, says: "The Wordsworths are at Montagu's rooms, near neighbours to us. They dined with us yesterday, and I was their guide to "Bartlemy Fair," and on the 24th of the same month, writing to Manning he says: "The Wordsworths have gone to Calais. They have since been in London and passed much time with us. He is now gone into Yorkshire to be married."

It was on this journey to the Continent that Wordsworth composed the sonnet

"Earth has not anything to show more fair."

and to this period also belong the sonnets

"Great men have been among us."

"Milton, thou shouldst be living at this hour."

and that which contains the well-known lines:—

We must be free or die, who speak the tongue
That Shakespeare spake; the faith and morals hold
Which Milton held.

It was at this time, to quote Sir Henry Taylor, that "he abandoned architecture and took to sculpture."

The marriage of William Wordsworth and Mary Hutchinson took place very quietly early on the morning of Monday, October 4th, 1802, at Brompton, near Scarboro', and the newly married couple, with Dorothy Wordsworth, at once commenced their return journey to Grasmere.

The presence of the bride's maid on the honeymoon journey would not under any circumstances have called for special comment, for the relations between brother and sister had been of a very exceptional nature, but at that time it was a common custom. Dickens makes Fanny Squeers accompany John Browdie and his wife to London on their wedding trip—journeying over part of the very road which the Wordsworths were to follow.

Soon after leaving Brompton the bridal party passed through Pickering. At that time the frescoes on the clerestory of the parish church, which to-day are such an attraction to visitors, were not visible. A former rector found that his parishioners paid more attention to the pictures than they did to his sermons, therefore he adopted the simple process of whitewashing them, which effectually prevented the congregation seeing, but whether it made them listen any better is quite another story.

Then through Sinnington, which recalls to all Yorkshiremen that most famous of trencher-fed packs, and its equally famous old huntsman Parker.

Says Dorothy: "At Kirby Moorside, whilst the horses were feeding, we went into the Churchyard, after we had put a letter into the Post Office for the *York Herald*. We sauntered about and read the gravestones." Truly this was a cheerful occupation for a wedding morning, and it has always been seized upon as an instance of Wordsworth's coldness. But it is probably what most people

have done at some time in their lives—not necessarily on the wedding journey, for post horses do not want feeding now-a-days—but when compelled to wait in a place possessing no particular attractions, one inevitably selects that which offers the greatest, and in a small country town or village this not infrequently is the churchyard. Be this as it may, it stands recorded that to pass the time the party “read the gravestones,” and there has always appeared an incongruity in the reading on such an occasion.

The diary has a word of praise for their driver from Helmsley, “who opened the gates so dexterously that the horses never stopped,” which proves that in 1802 there must have been gates across the road other than turnpike gates, and when crossing these hills some few years ago we found a few still remaining.

After a glance at Riveaulx Abbey they crossed the Hambleton Hills. These hills, which only rise to an altitude of about 1,000 feet, command from their western ridge an extensive view of the Vale of Mowbray, and of the hills which rise from it on the North and West. In some respects it is similar to the view of the Cheshire plain from Bowstonegate, but with this great difference that the Vale of Mowbray being entirely agricultural is free from the disfigurements of smoke, trade and manufactures. Away to the North is Wensley Moor, whence the knight rode to Hartleap Well, and following his route you come to the woods which lie above Richmond and its majestic Castle.

A few miles to the North-west is Cowton Moor, the battlefield of the Standard.

In the “White Doe of Rylstone” Norton says:—

Saw we not the Plain
(And flying shall behold again)
Where faith was proved?—while to battle moved
The Standard on the sacred Wain
That bore it.

A few miles across the Vale lies Topcliffe, a home of the Percys, very closely associated with the "Rising of the North," and familiar to all readers of Froude's "History of England."

Cobbett, who rode through the Vale in 1832, was not much taken with the condition of its agriculture, but a dozen years or so later, when Kingsley journeyed into Yorkshire to take up his Canonry at Middleham, he wrote of it to his wife:—

A long sweep of low rolling country with such soil, such crops, and such farming! I never saw such fertility before.

But beautiful as the Vale of Mowbray is to the stranger, from half-a-dozen view points, from this very Sutton Bank, from Geb-Dykes, from Hunton Plump, from Well—from Kepwick, or best of all perhaps from Mowbray Point, how much more so it is to those familiar with its details, who from these various eminences can fill in from memory the local colourings, and read as it were between the lines?

For the way to extract all that the Vale can give you is not to rush through it at American speed, not to motor, or even cycle through it, but to wander leisurely through its by-ways—to saunter along its bridle paths and foot-paths, to stop where you list, and for as long as you like, and so to absorb its restful loveliness.

Of these various places, however, the Wordsworths, on this particular journey saw nothing. Wordsworth has expressed in sonnet form what his sister embodied in her diary in prose.

Dark and more dark the shades of evening fell
The wished for point was reached—but at an hour
When little could be gained from that rich dower
Of prospect whereof many thousands tell.

Yet did the glowing West with marvellous power
Salute us ; there stood Indian citadel
Temple of Greece, and Minster with its tower
Substantially expressed, a place for bell
Or clock to toll from ! Many a tempting isle
With groves that never were imagined lay
'Mid seas how steadfast ! Objects all for the eye
Of silent rapture ; but we felt the while
We should forget them ; they are of the sky
And from our earthly memory fade away.

" We rode on in the dark," says Dorothy, " and reached Leeming Lane at eleven o'clock." By Leeming Lane she means the New Inn which was so known in the coaching time bills. Situate on the great North Road, it was the stage between Boroughbridge and Catterick Bridge, and was a busy house in those days.

To-day it stands substantially the same as in Wordsworth's day, but with the open space in front of it grass grown and with few signs of life about it. Like so many of its compeers it is used as a farmhouse, but cannot divest itself of the signs of its former functions, although the actual sign post has long since passed away.

It stands on the eastern side of the road, and to use a local expression, " if its walls could talk they would tell some queer tales" Some of the scandals at which that arch scandal monger Creevy hints might possibly be unearthed, and perhaps many adventures which were said to have taken place within its walls might be found only to exist in imagination. At any rate there is no doubt about our wedding party having spent the night there, and this must always give it an additional interest to all Wordsworthians.

Having two days' journey still before them, they started early on the Tuesday morning for Hawes. A few hundred yards north of the New Inn, and immediately

after passing the 219th mile post from London, stands the Oak Tree Inn—the rival coaching house at that time,—and now like its fellow inn, a quiet farmstead. So many circumstances point to this being the original of the Holy Tree Inn, that one inevitably connects it with that most delightful story, and we never glance down the road which leads to the Water Meadows without recalling the little red reading desk on the platform of the Free Trade Hall, Manchester, and Dickens' inimitable rendering of Boots' reflections on the little runaways.

"Boots don't know—perhaps I do—but, never mind, it don't signify either way—why it made a man fit to make a fool of himself to see them two pretty babies a-lying there in the clear, still, sunny day not dreaming half so hard when they was asleep as they done when they was awake. But, Lord! when you come to think of yourself, you know, and what a game you have been up to ever since you was in your own cradle, and what a poor sort of a chap you are, and how it's always either yesterday with you or else to-morrow and never to-day—that's where it is."

The travellers soon left Leeming Lane or "the Street," as it is still called, and their road ran through a succession of pleasant villages. Burneston—always connected with Mrs. Montagu, the original Blue stocking, several members of whose family were large benefactors to the parish—and Theakstone, where Carter the faithful friend and steward of the Montagu family lived. Through the sleepy old market town of Bedale, whose main street is dominated by its fine Church tower (it was a former Rector of this Church whose daughter Eliza or Elizabeth Lumley became the wife of Laurence Sterne), and forward into Wensleydale. They would pass within a short distance of Hauxwell, where one of Thackeray's fore-elders was for a time the

Rector, and where Mark Pattison, the Rector of Lincoln College, and his sister Dorothy Windlow, better known as Sister Dora, lived.

Further up the Dale they were detained for some time waiting for a fresh horse. Wordsworth himself writes of this stoppage. "The spot was in front of Bolton Hall, where Mary Queen of Scots was kept prisoner after her unfortunate landing at Workington. The place belonged to the Scropes, and Memorials of her are yet preserved there. To beguile the time I composed a sonnet. The subject was our own confinement contrasted with hers, *but it was not thought worthy of being preserved*"—a criticism which might fairly be offered of some other poems which Wordsworth wrote, and which unfortunately *were* preserved and published.

The following morning—a rainy one—they left Hawes at six o'clock, but the sun got out later in the day and "Mary was much pleased with Garsdale" is her sister-in-law's comment on this portion of the journey. They had a pleasant ride to Kendal, and reached Grasmere about six o'clock the same evening.

So ended this short but notable journey. To Wordsworth himself, with all his coldness, it must have been of supreme importance, for even with *his* abstraction in higher matters, and however pensive his mood, "human nature's daily food" had to be considered, and poets can no more live on verse alone than other mortals. They have sometimes to come down to the green earth, and the presence of such a wife as Mary Wordsworth—

A perfect woman, nobly planned
To warn, to comfort and command,
And yet a spirit still and bright
With something of angelic light,

must have exercised a great influence upon her husband, and the day's work at Brompton was an excellent one for him, and through him for all his readers.

For those who value the doctrine of "plain living and high thinking," however little they may practice it, the simplicity of the whole proceedings has a special charm. The village church—the quiet wedding—the entire absence of all display, and Dorothy's unaffected narrative, cannot fail to interest us.

For those to whom the North Riding is endeared by many a pleasant association, who look back with happy memories to the days spent on its hills and in its dales, an additional pleasure is given in thus recalling the wedding journey of the Poet Wordsworth and his radiant wife.





ON THE ALPS.

By PHILIP S. MINOR

THERE is no need to relate what happened to the three of us in the trains, on the boat, in London, and in Paris. The adventures we had were not climbing ones, though we enjoyed or suffered them in our several ways. It is enough to say that the two others refrained from following my example on the boat, and what I did was quite involuntary.

We started as climbers from Martigny by taking a conveyance as far as we could, and finished up with a five mile walk in the rain to Fionnay, where we discovered an hotel, which gave us shelter. On the Sunday morning we started for the Col de Fenêtre with our rucksacks. I cannot tell how heavy mine was, but never again do I intend to go over a pass of over 9,000 feet carrying on my back 150 lbs., the apparent weight at the end of the day. We reached the top in due course, and discovered, by consulting Ball, which was in my pocket, that it was two hours down to Ollomont, the nearest village. We ran most of the way, and in about four hours from the top we reached that village, and later, having commandeered a man and a horse to carry our rucksacks, we found ourselves at Valpelline about ten in the evening. There Ball said the best hotel was the "Lion d'Or," and we looked for it for several hours, or so the time appeared to us. Then we arranged for one of us to try to understand

French, spoken with a provincial accent, with the result that we believe the "Lion d'Or" does not exist. However, we found charitable persons at an inn, who made up beds for us on the floor.

The next day we continued our climbing by driving through Aosta to Aymaville, and then walked to Cogne, hiring a mule for our rucksacks. Another of us practised French on the driver, and was rewarded by a ride on the mule. At Cogne we went to one of the two hotels, and we advise everyone else to go to the other. We arose the next morning at the late hour of six, and proceeded to try to find our way by the Pousset Chalets to the Punta Rossa, a hill about 18 feet under 12,000. We, however, missed the path, and did a ridge walk, bagging a 10,000 feet peak on the way. From the Punta Rossa we had a fine view of the Grivola, and planned our route up that hill. The next day we started in the afternoon for the Herbetat Chalets, and there spent the night. The stones were hard and sharp, the hay was scanty, the fleas were many. I may say, however, that we brought them all away, as the next time we went there there were none left. We started for the Herbetat the following morning early, and took to the ridge, and had three hours' excellent rock climbing, only to find ourselves on the glacier with a longer ridge in front on which we had many more hours of climbing. The easier and usual course would have been to have taken to the glacier for an hour, and so avoided the three hours' lower rock climb. As a result of not doing this we had the choice at 3-30 in the afternoon, when over 12,000 feet, and within 200 feet of the top, of continuing our climb and staying at the Chalets again, or traversing to the north ridge and coming down. We understood that a search party would cost about £100, and we decided our peak was not worth that, and so came down, getting to

the valley just at dusk, and spending some hours in the dark finding our way along the valley to Cogne.

After that we took a day off, and the following day climbed the Grivola, a 13,000 feet peak over 8,000 feet up and down from Cogne, a capital view point, a very interesting climb, and easy to find except at the lower levels on the way to the Pousset Chalets, where we were troubled with a path.

This was all we did without guides, and a word as to guideless work may be useful. Given fine weather (which we had all through except for about four hours), and given plenty of time, say three months' holiday each year, I think guideless climbing is excellent sport. But it wants plenty of time, so that mistakes one day may be rectified the next; and it wants to be practised on the less important hills first. It is not advisable to do any complicated glacier or any hill much over 13,000 feet without a guide. One is used to the full description of the ways up British hills. Ball will dismiss 4,000 feet in three or four lines.

We took a guide for the Grand Paradis, sleeping once more in the Herbetat Chalets, and finding the fauna absent. The traverse of this mountain is excellent but very complicated on the Cogne side. The view from the top was, in my opinion, the best we had. We were high, but not high enough to look down on all the hills, and we could therefore see better the beauty of their forms. We came down to Pont, in the Val Savaranche, on the Monday, walked and drove to Courmayeur on the Tuesday, and loafed on the Wednesday

We arranged for two guides for Mont Blanc, and at seven o'clock on the Thursday morning one turned up to say that his cousin, the other guide, was detained by family affairs. We at once expressed a hope that the

mother and child were doing well, and were told they were, but the child was aged ten, and family affairs merely meant that the other guide was rich and had changed his mind. However, by eight o'clock we had secured another guide, and were on our way to the Dome Hut, which we reached before dark, and cooked and enjoyed a six-course dinner, the materials for which we had carried up. About 2-30 a.m. we were on our way again, reached the top about 1-30 p.m., and came to Chamonix about 8-30 p.m., having walked eighteen hours, during fifteen of which we had the rope on. I had never been over 13,500 feet before and I found the last 2,000 feet very trying. In fact, I noticed that over 10,000 feet there was a want of sufficient air to be quite comfortable. It should, however, be stated that it was only in ascending that the rarity of air was any inconvenience to me. I walked about without any unusual effort on the top of Mont Blanc, and came down as fast as regard for safety in the steps would allow. One of the party suffered from headache over 14,000 feet, and this continued till he was below 10,000 feet in coming down. The guides, too, admitted a pressure on their foreheads which seemed to last some time. I think the headache is worse for the individual, but the shortness of breath the worse for the party, as it meant moving very slowly upward.

I travelled back from Chamonix alone without baggage. I had no more climbing adventures. My French conversation (mostly nouns) was just enough to carry me through. Part of the time in the train I travelled with two Americans, four Spaniards, and one German, and the attempt to understand one another in French, our only common language, was distinctly humorous.

I intend to try more mountains another year if possible, even though when I get over 10,000 or 12,000 feet my breath comes in a series of gasps, and I wonder while proceeding uphill why people ever do come out to climb.



SEAFARING BALLADS.

By TINSLEY PRATT.

I

"OLAF THE VIKING."

(Tenth century.)

OLAF of Norway
Sails o'er the Swan's bath,
His ship is the Serpent,
Great dragon of war!
Master of heroes,
Ruler of Baresarks,
Olaf of Norway,
King of the Sea!

Time was when heroes
Prayed unto Odin,
Prayed unto Freya,
And Thor with his hammer,
Ere yet the White Christ
Reigned in His glory
Throughout the Norselands.

Praise then to Olaf,
True child of Harald—
Harald the Fairhaired!
Spent was his childhood

Far hence in bondage;
Great were the deeds of
His youth and his manhood,
Ere yet he came to
His Kingdom of Norway.

Winds of the wide world
Come o'er the Swan's bath,
Fill the white sail, and
Speed the Long Serpent,
Gull of the fiord,
Snake of the Sea!

II.

"CAPTAIN BASSET."

(Sixteenth century.)

A youth rode west from London town;
A sword from his girdlestead hung down:
And ever he laughed—as who should say—
"I'm bound for Plymouth port away!"

Now when he came to Catte-water
Upspake an ancient shipman there;
And "whither away, my son," he cried,
"Or would you range the waters wide?"

Answered the lad: "I pray you tell
If Captain Basset be hale and well?
For I would to the Spanish Main
When the *Lapwing* puts to sea again."

"Captain Basset," the shipman cried,
"Alas! he sleeps beneath the tide!
And I, of his merry shipmen all,
Alone may answer to the call."

"Captain Basset he put to sea,
And shook each reef of canvas free:
But never again, in weal or woe,
Did the *Lapwing* fetch to Plymouth Hoe.

"She lies a hundred fathoms sheer,
Where fierce leviathans round her steer;
And little it cheers my heart to know
Of the gold and jewels that lie below.

"Yet sometimes in my dreams I see
The *Lapwing* steering o'er the sea:
Then at the watch I take my spell
And hear the shipman strike the bell.

"But hie you back to London town,
By road, and stream, and breezy down;
For Captain Basset, you well may know,
Shall never more come to Plymouth Hoe."



A NEW BOOK OF NONSENSE.

Puck the Rebellious

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